Trying to catch a break

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Trying to catch a break

by Pirate_Web

Summary

Violent murders. Throats torn out. Blood drained.

Will had his work cut out for him when he was tasked with tracking down who was causing the recent killings.
A seemingly vampiric figure killing at random, he needed to put a stop to it, whatever the cost.

But the closer Will got, the more interest the killer has in him.

Hounds

Will grimaced and stood up, glancing at the body in front of him. It matched the description of other victims like the girl, neck torn open and drained completely dry of blood.

The Beast of Baltimore.

Her body was strung upside down with rope, Beverly had chimed in about how much it looked like a tarot card, one of The World apparently, Will didn't really know that much about tarot, white rods tied tightly to her hands, and a silken sheet draped across her corpse in a morbid display of megalomania except... He couldn't feel the desire to show off.

Will shuddered at the imagery, "How old was she?"

Jack sighed and rubbed his hands to try and warm up, winter had reared its head once again and no one wanted to stick around longer than they had to, "Brian says around 30, she was a mechanic at the local town, he thinks her car broke down, jumped by the killer while she was fixing it."

He furrowed his brow at the road, the large pool of blood where she was bitten - torn apart, more accurately - had dried, leaving a large maroon stain to seep into the once light brown dirt path, Will shook his head, "Her car looks new though, and if she was a mechanic, then she probably looked after her car a lot."

"That's the thing, apparently the spark plugs were tampered with, replaced with faulty ones."

"The killer targeted her beforehand, must've stalked her for a while before making a move."

Will shivered against the breeze, winter was settling in fast, and he still had to prep for the upcoming chill that was soon to follow.

He hated the cold. The cold just reminded him of his time as a child. The hairs on the back of his neck stuck up on end from the wind, he wanted nothing more than to just curl up with his dogs and wait the next few nights out.

"From what I can tell, the killer didn't think much of her... saw her as little more than a pig put to slaughter." He stuffed his hands into his pockets, the smell of death was overwhelming, "He might still be around."

"What makes you think that?"

"He thinks he's unstoppable, he *wants* to gloat to us that he can kill whoever *he* wants, he doesn't think we can stop him. Beverly says the world when upside down is..." He paused to try and remember, *"Incompletion."*

"Well... take a look around the people, let me know who you suspect."

Will nodded, putting his glasses on and looking around the crowd of people trying to catch a glimpse of the corpse. There was a lingering feeling of being watched that he couldn't shake burrowing into the back of his skull.

He spotted Freddie in the crowd, snapping photos at him and the body, Will wouldn't be surprised if another article popped up in the morning about how he was put back onto casework.

Beverly stepped next to Will and sighed, "They've got you back on these jobs, huh?"

"Yeah... I miss teaching."

"What's up? Is it the moon thing?"

Will rubbed his face, "Well, that and something else... it's the case, it reeks of... You know what."

Her eyebrows raised, "Monsters? What kind?"

"Vampire..."

"Do you need me to watch out for you? Don't vampires and... *you*... not get along?"

A smile cracked on Will's face and he giggled, "It's not a bad word, Bev, and I'm pretty sure that's Twilight."

"Hey, Twilight is great, don't diss it, man."

"I know... I appreciate you keeping this whole thing under wraps, I'm sorry for dragging you into it all though. You're a great friend, but I feel bad that you got involved... I should've been more careful with the whole... Thing."

"Don't apologise, I think you're great, tail 'n all." She slung her arm around Will's shoulder, "You're lucky I'm good at making excuses for you, you would've been outed a *long* time ago."

Another giggle, "The tail thing was *one* time."

Hannibal smiled and clinked glasses with his guests, he had invited Jack along to one of his dinner parties in order to discuss the murder of one of his patients.

He looked up at Jack and smiled, noticing the man that was tagging alongside him. He sipped at his wine and passed a glass to Jack and the man, to which Jack accepted gratefully.

"Good evening Agent Crawford, thank you for coming."

"Of course Dr Lecter, this is my consultant on the case, Will Graham."

A smile danced on Hannibal's lips as he admired the man in front of him, the way that his curly brown hair fell in front of his face had Hannibal intrigued. His smell was heavily disguised with the scent of cheap cologne, he was a man with something to hide, and Hannibal demanded to know more.

Hannibal held out his hand and nodded politely.

"It's a pleasure to meet your acquaintance, Mr Graham."

Will's mouth twitched in response and looked away, looking down at the dark red liquid in his wine glass, "Of course."

The smile on Hannibal's mouth spread, his curiosity piqued. He tended to have little care about humans, but something about Will was different.

"So," Jack looked around, "Once you're ready to talk about the case, we can sit someplace quiet."

Hannibal nodded, leading the men to his office and sat down, watching how Will's eyes dragged over every small detail of the room, focusing in particular on a small bronze statue on his desk. He kept an eye on Will as he spoke, watching him shrink in his chair, anxiety practically radiating off of the boy in waves.

There was something off about his behaviour.

"My patient, Stephanie, was a lovely girl. She had a case of acute paranoia, thought that someone was watching her, however, I prescribed her a dosage of antidepressants to try and help her."

"I suppose she was right... Someone had replaced her spark plugs with faulty ones, caused a breakdown. Did she say anything that could reveal who killed her?"

"She seemed convinced that there was a stag stalking her."

Will visibly bristled as he toyed with his scarf, perhaps Will knew what he was? He needed to make sure.

Will slumped down in his car, looking at the broken dashboard. According to the needle, there was maybe just enough petrol left in the tank to get him home. Guess he couldn't have heating for the trip.

He shuddered as he drove, trying desperately to quell the shivering when a spluttering noise erupted from his engine. *"No no no..."* Will hissed as his car rolled unceremoniously to a halt.

Shit.

He glanced around cautiously, no one was lurking around for him like Stephanie. He was sure he had some leftover petrol for emergencies only, so he slinked out of the car and popped open the boot to grab the container and headed over to the side.

It was *fine, everything was fine.*

There was a snort, and Will turned around. There was a large black stag stood in the middle of the road, his heart skipped a beat when he remembered Dr Lecter's words. Stephanie was stalked by a stag, and now here was one stood before him.

Needless to say, Will was nervous, he wasn't sure how well he could hold his own against another older monster.

The stag approached closer, and Will glanced at the plumage of feathers on the deer's chest in confusion.

"Good evening."

Will spun around and sighed, "Oh, good evening Dr Lecter, I'm thankful to see a friendly face... What with the murders and all."

He feigned relief, staying on edge as the scent of danger filled the air. With his ears hidden under his hat and his natural scent hidden beneath his cologne, his ability to pick up on minute dangers and a line of defence against vampires was dampened, Hannibal looked curiously at him.

"Of course, what seems to be the problem?"

"Ran out of petrol... I thought I had some spare but it's still not enough to get me home, and I've got no signal to call someone."

"Oh?"

Will nodded dejectedly, "Don't you live in Maryland? What're you doing all the way here in Wolf Trap?"

"I have a patient with agoraphobia, so I go to his home for therapy."

"Oh right..." Will looked down, "That makes sense."

Hannibal looked at Will's neck and hummed, smirking at the way the mans tensed from the attention, he could hear the blood pounding in Will's ears as it flushed across his face, "Wolf Trap... Why'd you pick to live here? There are rumours of monsters that stalk in the woods."

"I don't... Do well with a lot of people." He sighed, shutting his car door, "I'll just push it to the side of the road and call a pickup truck. I can walk home."

"Nonsense, I can drive you home."

Will tugged at his beanie and shook his head, "I'm not *helpless,* doctor. It's not my first time having my car break down on the way home."

"You'll freeze to death before you reach home."

There was a heavy sigh as Will relented, *"Fine,* but just this once, ok?"

"Of course, get in."

Forgotten Sanctuary

Will held his hands out in front of the vents and sighed, he was internally thankful for agreeing to being driven home, he managed to regain most of the feeling in his hands and feet.

The car stopped, and he looked at his house. It was cold, and he knew that he was going to have to get out and look after his dogs.

"Thanks, Dr Lecter."

"It's my pleasure."

He watched as Will climbed out of the car and hurried inside.

Hannibal leaned back and sighed, he knew it was a bad idea to keep a human alive, let alone a potential monster, but his infatuation only increased tenfold as he thought more and more about Will.

He wanted to have Will to himself, whatever the cost.

He could have the man dressed up with expensive outfits and paraded to others during social events in the world of vampiric politics, the higher the status of vampire, the higher the expectations of getting a person to begin the enthralling process with, and with Hannibal inheriting the Lecter estate after his parents' death, the expectations had been there since he was 15.

He never displayed much interest in acquiring a thrall, but meeting Will changed that, and the mental image of him decorated in bites and bruises went straight to his dick.

Hannibal looked around and paused, slowly getting out of his car and carefully approaching Will's house, he could quickly incapacitate the man and take him back to his office, tell Jack that Will wanted to start therapy with him. He peered through the window, there had to be at least 10 dogs in the living room, - Hannibal could bribe them into silence with food - he walked over to the door and silently entered the main room.

Will's dogs smelled the foreign intrusion and woke up, but the dog treats that were given to them all eased their concern, some wandered off, displaying their newfound disinterest in Hannibal, while others went back to sleep.

He turned around to the bed in the corner of the room. Will was asleep, a golden opportunity that Hannibal jumped on.

Will was awake in an unfamiliar room.

It was almost completely pitch black with how dark the room was, he was internally grateful that werewolves were able to see in the dark, though he still wasn't used to navigating in the night, having preferred to avoid hunting as much as possible.

He was sat in a large four-poster bed with silken red sheets decorated with ornate gold trimmings. He dragged himself out of the bed and trudged to the dark wooden door, surprised at how it creaked open to welcome him to the dim candlelit hallway.

The smell of vampire hung heavy in the air, making Will on edge as it coiled tightly around his body.

Vampires scared Will, they were the type of monster where the majority of the subspecies could assimilate fully with humans - so long as they could feed - the ones being unable to preferred eating larger sport, or other monsters. His subspecies could control his shifting but still had to hide whenever the moon was full, lest he wanted to end up a wolf in the middle of a crowd.

He shuddered at the thought as he made his way downstairs.

"Good morning."

Will leapt at the voice, turning to look at the figure in the kitchen. It was Hannibal.

"Where am I?"

"My office," He stepped into the light, "You showed up at my door in the middle of the night to talk about the case, I made you some tea and you fell asleep. I didn't want you to have to drive three hours back in the cold, especially with the snowstorm. Don't worry, Jack is making sure your dogs are alright."

Will sat down at the kitchen table, looking around at the expensive-looking marble floors and glossy wooden table, it was very extravagant, and he knew that the kitchen alone was more expensive than his entire home, "I don't remember."

Hannibal nodded, the smell of cheap cologne had worn off of Will, allowing him to figure out what exactly he was.

"Why are you hiding?"

Will looked up at Hannibal, his heart was pounding. Werewolves were dangerous, sure, but generally, they had an entire pack at their back.

"I'm... not hiding?"

"You're not wearing that cologne that hides your scent." he leaned closer, "But we know what each other are, don't we? We don't need to assimilate with humans to save face."

Will swallowed, "A vampire is the one killing those people, you know..."

"Right monster, wrong subspecies, the one you're looking for has reversed serrated fangs."

"So... What do you want from me?"

Hannibal passed Will a plate, "You know how vampiric politics work, don't you?"

"Vaguely." He glanced at Hannibal, shooting him a tired look. "Why?"

"You know what happens the higher a vampires position becomes?"

"The court wants you to have a thrall?" Will shrugged, "Don't you already have one?"

"I don't, no. However, I could use you to gain favour at the upcoming event."

He scoffed, "Of course, cause werewolves are *dangerous,* unlike humans... You want to be seen as powerful, that you were able to bend *me* to your will, especially with how pack orientated we are."

"Yes."

"Then no."

Hannibal's mouth twitched, he wanted nothing more than to take what he wanted, force Will to his knees and make him cooperate. He could just as well put a collar on the man and train him like the dog he could transform into.

He tilted his head, "Why?"

"I'm a *solitary werewolf,* I barely interact with monsters. Hell, the most I do is shift every time the moon is full and even *then* I'm looking for a way to stop that from happening." Will glanced at his phone, "Speaking of, the full moon is tonight, so if you don't mind, I'd quite like to chain myself up in my house so I don't end up hurting someone."

"I'd rather not have a thrall if I could avoid it, we could pretend at the event."

Will furrowed his brow, "What's in it for me?"

"I might know some information about the vampire killings, if you pretend to be my thrall for the event, I will give you that."

"Fine... I'm not doing anything weird though."

Harpies

"I don't know *why* I agreed to this..." Will grumbled as he fixed his hair, glancing down at himself, there was a stark juxtaposition between Hannibal's suit and his own outfit.

His clothes were masterfully tailored to accentuate his shoulders, the eggshell white shirt and pocket square stood out against his navy blue three-piece, he finished tying his silky maroon tie - Hannibal assured to Will that the brown tie he was looking at was in fact, red. Though he didn't quite believe him - and smoothed down the back slits, finishing off his look with two silver cufflinks adorned with the Lecter family crest.

"You said you wanted information on the vampire that killed those women."

"I'm practically nude."

Hannibal sneaked a glance at Will, admiring how the mans smaller frame seemed to almost glow in the amber candlelight, he had large raised scars strewn across his once smooth body, it was rare for a werewolf to reach Wills age and come out completely unscathed. What little dignity he had was kept hidden beneath a matching navy blue loincloth topped off with a leather dog collar.

"You're self-conscious?" He looked at the glare Will shot at him.

"No."

"Your subspecies makes it so you have wolf ears and a tail, even in your human form."

"So what?" Will snorted, "I'm not self-conscious about *that."*

"If not, then why are their natural resting state pinned to your head and tucked away?"

"Hiding them doesn't mean I'm *ashamed* of them."

Hannibal raised his hand above Will's head as if he were about to pet him, smiling slightly when a pair of fluffy brown dog ears sprung up from under Wills mass of curls and a large shaggy tail behind him started wagging in anticipation.

Hannibal liked how werewolves reacted to attention, as tough as Will tried to make himself appear, werewolves would always crave family bonds, even the most solitary of them still kept some form of pet, and Will was no different.

Will frowned, "That wasn't fair, you know I can't control that."

"Stay close to me while we're inside."

"You don't have to tell me twice..."

The hall was old with large milky white elaborate columns that reached the angels on the painted ceiling, the carvings having golds and silvers coiling around each corner. Will didn't know where to look, there was so much. Hannibal smiled and greeted a small group.

"Dr Lecter!" The woman in the group cooed, "It's *so* good to see you at these events again."

"It's a pleasure, Cassandra."

"And who's *this?"* She gestured to Will, who was taking his time to smell the bouquet of white and yellow flowers on the table nearby.

"That's my new thrall, Will." He smiled when Will's ears sprung up at the mention of his name, Hannibal's heart softened slightly at the image. Will turned around and scooted closer to Hannibal, dipping his head and fidgeting with his cloth, "He's a werewolf."

"Not *just* a werewolf, Hannibal. You've managed to enthral a werewolf from the Louisiana red wolf pack... That's one of the oldest and most reclusive packs in the south, we've been trying to establish communication with them for *decades* with no luck."

Will felt multiple eyes suddenly lock onto him, Hannibal raised his eyebrows in interest, "Oh?"

Cassandra nodded, "They keep to themselves, but the species of wolf they're closest related to is critically endangered. They don't often try to assimilate with humans, it's near impossible with their ears and tail."

"Why try to establish communication?"

"The whole reason how you made him your thrall, they'll pack bond with anything because of their extremely high empathy."

"I see... Thank you for the information."

Hannibal nodded and quietly led Will to a more reserved area of the room, sitting on the plush velvet couch and gently pulling Will down to join him.

"You never told me about the pack."

"You never asked." Will took a glass of champagne and sipped at it, "Plus... I ran away when I was a teen."

"Right... I have the information on the vampire that was killing those people if you're still seeking it."

Will scrunched his face and turned to look at the sunset, "Go on then."

"So... you know the sister of the guy that killed those people?"

"Margot, I'm her therapist."

Will sighed, finishing off his glass of champagne, "What do you suggest we do to catch him? I mean I can't really tell Jack about all... *this."*

"I'll ask his sister, she also holds a grudge against her brother."

"I don't have a grudge." Hannibal watched Will shift in his seat uncomfortably, a small bead of sweat forming on his brow as he tapped the glass in a way to try and distract himself, "Can we go now?"

"Why?"

"I'm tired... And I'm drunk."

He raised his eyebrow at Will's excuse, "Are you sure it's not because that you're starting to sweat?"

"No." Will got to his feet, lurching and stumbling forwards into Hannibal's arms, Will tried to squirm out of his grip, scowling, "You can let go of me now."

"Wolves mating cycles usually occur during winter, do they not?"

Will shot Hannibal an incredulous look, "God no! I'm not... *It's not that."*

Hannibal watched Will's previously annoyed expression became one of anxiety and pain, he remembered the moon in the sky the first time he brought Will home. A waxing gibbous.

"Dr Lecter!" Cassandra hurried over, "I found-"

"Not now Madame Belmont," Hannibal interjected, "It seems Will has started the process of shifting."

"A full moon, I know. Bring him to the front, I told The Grandmaster about him, he brought the cage, he wants to see the boy for himself."

Hannibal weighed the options in his head, he could either try and get Will home, though he would probably end up shifting in the car. Not enough time. He considered bringing him to a backroom in the hall and keeping him locked in, but that'd end in trying to sneak a wolf out of the building.

He was sure Will would probably prefer slight public humiliation to inadvertently eating someone.

Chapter 4

Hannibal watched on in morbid curiosity as Will was brought into the cage before the vampires.

He had read about how full moon transformations were painful for the werewolf compared to routine shifting, with routine shifting being more akin to ripping off a plaster; painful in the moment, but quickly died down once it was over. However, the moon transformation was slow, drawing out the intense feelings of having your entire body reform.

Will hated being stared at, especially now that he had just had his whole body force itself out of shape. He clamped his hands down tightly around his waist and squeezed, much like his changing insides seemed to be doing to themselves. He knew it'd all be over soon enough, it was just like all those other times he transformed.

He paused for a moment to catch his breath. If he could shift his focus away from the pain his body was inducing, he could figure out how to get out of this situation.

His head felt eerily light, everything seemed to spin around him. He knew deep down that there wasn't much that could be done either way, so the best course of action was to just wait it out and try not to resist the changes too much.

Hannibal approached closer to the cage, he was awed at the small wolf that was now in Will's place.

"This is your thrall, is it not Dr Lecter?"

"Yes." He turned to look at the small wiry man in front of him, giving The Grandmaster a reserved smile. He didn't like the man.

To Hannibal, The Grandmaster within vampiric politics were just the prime example of nepotism, voting in old and decrepit vampires that had no idea how to interact with humans, preferring *"The Old Ways"* of complete domination over humanity.

The Grandmaster nodded, "A werewolf, that'll get you far here. I've never seen such a small one before, he's got some temper, hasn't he?"

"I'd like to take him home, this has already been stressful enough, and I doubt he's enjoying this attention."

"Of course, let me mark him for you before you go. This is a *great* moment for house Lecter."

Will visibly bristled when Hannibal and The Grandmaster entered the cage, investigation be damned, he would fight his way out if he had to. He turned to glare at Hannibal, who held the scruff of his neck and leaned in close to whisper in his ears.

"You need to let this happen, they'll figure us out if you don't."

He cringed internally, it's not like he could refuse. Though he'd prefer to have at least one less mark on his body to remind him that he couldn't belong to himself, every last one were just reminders: *"Runt"* scraped across his back, *"Too passive"* on his neck, *"Scared"* down his arms. Now he was going to have *"Hannibal"* on his body.

Hannibal nodded to the man, who stepped behind Will and inserted the microchip.

Will woke up tired, in pain, starving, and human again. He could smell Hannibal's cooking wafting into his room, his stomach giving him a pitiful noise as he tried to stay in bed.He didn't want to go downstairs and eat, he was still upset about being forced into a cage and microchipped like some pet. He relented, heading downstairs and sitting at the table.

"You burned a lot of calories shifting, you must be hungry."

Will scowled, "You *chipped me."*

"It was that or having everyone figure out that you were an investigator, I'm sure you didn't want to become my coat."

"No..." he looked up at Hannibal, "I don't appreciate being treated like a *pet,* you know."

Hannibal sat a large plate of food in front of Will, watching intently as his tail wagged happily as he ate, he enjoyed at how Will's anger easily crumbled away as much as he tried to hide it. He sat down across from Will, silently eating his own breakfast.

"You said you ran away from home."

"I did."

"Why was that?"

"You saw those scars on my body, don't you know why?"

"I don't know."

Will sighed, tugging his shirt off and showing Hannibal his scar covered body, he didn't meet Hannibal's gaze, fixating on the floor instead out of embarrassment.

"Here, look. You know what the different claws and bites mean, read them."

Hannibal gently rested his hands on Will's chest, feeling the man tense up underneath him. He felt anger bubble in the pit of his stomach when Will reacted, he kept his hands still until Will relaxed under his hands. He ran his fingers across the raised pink scars, they were checkered with insults and criticisms, the man's whole life story on display for him. It was extremely intimate, Hannibal broke eye contact, preferring to watch the rise and fall of Will's chest as he read the marks.

"You were the runt of a litter, though the others died shortly after childbirth... You were expected to be great, to rise up like your parents and become a high ranking member of the

pack once they passed."

"Yeah... only the alphas are allowed to have babies, some leave to have their own kids and become alphas of their own new pack." Will sighed and moved Hannibal's hands off of him, "I gotta go."

"Where are you going?"

"Work." Will put his shirt and coat on, "Not all of us are attractive, mega-rich playboy vampires like you, so if you'd prefer me to not starve to death, I bid you adieu."

Hannibal watched as he hurried out the door. As impolite as he thought Will could be sometimes, Hannibal found himself becoming more and more enamoured by him. He was going to have to tell Will how he felt eventually, but for now he was gone, and Hannibal was alone with his thoughts.

"You look a mess."

Will glanced up from his laptop, "Thanks, Bev."

"Of course, it's practically my duty as your friend," Beverly grinned, rearranging the pins on the corkboard on the wall, "So, anything in the realm of monsters about that whole..." She put her fingers to her mouth, pointing them downwards like fangs as she mock-hissed.

"I guess? You know that doctor that Jack met?"

"Lecter? I've heard of him."

"I'd rather not get into the details, but he says that the type of vampire that caused it were from the Verger family."

"How?"

"He says that Mason Verger's sister comes to him for therapy, so I guess he'd know what kind of fangs they have."

She raised an eyebrow, "And he just *gave you* all that information for free?"

"No, but what matters is that we have a general idea of who we're looking for, and with that, we can figure out why he's killing."

"What did you do?" She paused and grinned widely, "Was it... *you know?"*

"What? *No! Jeez* Beverly, I didn't have *sex* with him!"

"Hey, I'm not judging! Love who you want, Hannibal's not a bad looking guy."

Will went red, "I don't- *I'm not-"* He spluttered, "I am *not in love with him."*

"Sure," She propped up a chair and sat down next to Will, "Pass me the laptop? I'll find the Verger website for you, should have contact info there."

Yearning

Will shuddered as both he and Beverly trudged towards the Verger estate, they didn't know what to expect when they went inside, though Hannibal had assured them that Margot would be waiting for them to let them in through the stables and interrogate Mason.

"Do you think he like... drinks the tears of orphans or something?"

"Why would he wanna do that?" Will looked up at the spires of the mansion, "Sounds salty."

"I dunno, what else do mega-rich vampires do for fun?"

"Will Graham."

Beverly and Will turned around to where the voice came from, a young woman dismounted a large black horse and took her riding helmet off, gesturing for the two to follow her.

"Yes?"

"Dr Lecter let me know you and Miss Katz were arriving, you're both here on account of my brother."

Beverly nodded, "There have been multiple murders in Baltimore, we know it was a vampire but didn't know what kind."

"You're a human, how'd you find out about monsters?"

"I went over to Will's house to grab some files on a case, walked in on him chained up in a room at the back. I thought he was just into weird stuff, y'know, but turns out it was the full moon."

"Hannibal told me about Will, he had a lot of *interesting* things to say."

"Like what?"

Will frowned, "I'm right here you know."

"Come on Will, I'm trying to help you get some action!"

Margot smiled and turned to Mason's room, "Here we are. Just a word of advice, if Mason offers you chocolate... Do yourself a favour and *politely* refuse."

"Ah, you must be Will and Beverly. Margot told me that you were coming."

"We're here to talk about the recent murders."

"Oh?" Mason turned around in his chair and pursed his lips, "Ah, I thought you'd both be human. This... *complicates* things."

"We know that it was a vampire that was going around killing those people, Dr Lecter told us that only the Verger family had the type of fangs required to tear open throats like that."

"What a smart little doggy," he smirked at how Will reacted. He rose to his feet and walked forwards, watching how the man's ears slowly moved back to a defensive position as he grew closer, "Lecter always liked obedient mates... or whatever your kind calls partners."

"This has nothing to do with him."

"Of course, you want to know about the murders. I killed them, you can't exactly say to the FBI that I'm a vampire and I love to go around tearing out little piggies throats. You need evidence, *where are you going to get that from?"*

"We'll find it."

"Maybe, though I doubt that. I'd like to talk to Miss Katz alone now, I feel like she'd appreciate my advice more than you can, go sit in the car little doggy."

Beverly shrugged at Will before he relented and stepped out of the room, angrily muttering to himself as he left.

Mason sighed and turned around to look at Beverly, "Mr Graham may have fallen for Hannibal, but I think you're smart enough to realise that he's just as dangerous as I am."

"Fallen for him how?"

"Most werewolves can't hide their feelings unless they're older, warriors, or the alpha. Just watch how his ears and tail reacts whenever you mention Hannibal or talk to him."

"You said Hannibal was dangerous."

"Do you not think that it's not just a little... *coincidental* that he chose the FBI profiler to try and start a relationship with? Or that he picked the half-dog on the team as opposed to a human?"

Beverly shrugged, "Maybe he just has a thing for werewolves."

"Do some research into the Chesapeake Ripper while you help dear Will, perhaps you'll find something interesting."

Beverly stepped outside the mansion and walked over to Will, who was sulking in the car, she sat inside and slumped back into the seat with an exasperated sigh.

"What an ass."

"I can see why Twilight made it so vampires and werewolves don't like each other."

"You're sulking."

"I am."

Will didn't look up from staring out the window, Beverly frowned slightly.

"Is it because Mason made you sit outside in the car?"

"Yeah... I'm not a dog."

"Come on, don't let that... *weirdo* get to you," She paused, remembering Masons comment about Hannibal, "Let's call Hannibal and see if he can give us a lead."

Will's ears perked up at the mention of the name; just like Mason said he would, "You're right."

"So... We're friends, aren't we Will?"

"Yeah?"

"Would you tell me if something was wrong?"

"Huh?" He looked away from the road and at Beverly, "What are you getting at? I'm not addicted to my pain medication, ok? I've just had really bad headaches recently."

"It's not *that,* it's..." Beverly sighed, "You *know* the guys at work will still consider you our friend no matter what."

"I know."

Will contemplated jumping from the moving car to avoid the upcoming conversation, but he decided against it, the thought of having to walk home after almost skinning himself alive on the asphalt was more than enough to prevent him.

"So if you're feeling things that you're not used to... *attraction* to people you're not used to... you can tell us y'know, Brian and Jimmy are good guys."

"Is this because I've been talking to Dr Lecter?"

"I mean, you behave differently around him compared to other men." Beverly watched as Will made a face at the comment, "It's alright if you have a crush."

"I just... I don't know *how* to feel."

"Tell me about it, does he make you feel all tingly inside when you see him?"

"It's *more than that* Beverly, I don't know why, but whenever he's not around I feel like something's been *torn* from me. Whenever he's near me it's like just his words... they make everything feel like it's going to be alright in the end. I mean, when I went with him to that

event with other vampires, I was super freaked out but when he put his arm around me I just melted inside..." Will suddenly looked down and shrugged, "I don't know why."

Beverly looked at Will, "Wow... You are *hardcore yearning* right now Will."

"But I can't... I like women."

"You can like anyone, including multiple genders, or all of them."

"Oh," Will looked slightly embarrassed, "I think I like..."

"Hannibal?"

He nodded, "I think I like Hannibal..."

Humility of Man

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Hannibal looked down at his sketch, two lovers caught in a tight embrace as the world crumbled around them; an image that reminded him of the tragic love between Achilles and Patroclus. Two men doomed to love eternally, even in death.

A knock at the door brought Hannibal out of his thoughts, he rose to his feet and opened it.

"Agent Crawford, Ms Katz, a pleasure to have you tonight."

"Thank you for the invite to dinner, Jack told me all about your cooking."

Hannibal didn't seem to notice the compliment, "Where's Will?"

"He takes a road that a lot of people dump their dogs to see if there's any for him to take in, he'll probably be here in a few hours."

"Ah, he is an admirable man." Hannibal admired Will's empathy, he wondered if he gave the man a child, would he display the same unending love to them like his dogs?

He led the two to the table, pouring them glasses of wine. Beverly watched as Hannibal periodically checked his phone every few moments, looking for any sort of message from Will.

"Waiting for him to message you?"

Hannibal glanced at Beverly, "Yes, I suppose I am."

"You'll be lucky if he even reads your messages," She smiled, "Will has a phone for Jack to call him and that's about it, it's just a cheap second-hand thing that I had to force him to get."

"I had to convince him to let me drive him home when his car broke down."

Jack laughed, "Will would give you the shirt off his own back, but then bite his own hand off to avoid you doing the same in return."

"You wouldn't *believe* it," Beverly poured herself another glass, "I met him when I first joined the FBI, Alana told me that he probably wouldn't talk to me or even really acknowledge for the first few weeks and to not take it personally. Well, when I went to his office to introduce myself, he must've been told that I played the violin because he gave me a handmade bow, I still use it to this day."

"I met Will at The Evil Minds Museum, didn't say much but tell me about how he thought that the name of the exhibit glorified the killers. After I had convinced him to teach here at Baltimore, he overheard that I like to fish and gave me a boxful of lures to use."

"Wait till he finds out that you're an artist, Dr Lecter, you'll never have to buy your own paint for as long as you're friends with him."

It had been a few hours since Jack and Beverly had left after dinner, Hannibal looked at the now cold plate of food he had prepared for Will. A noise at the door startled him, he walked over and opened it to find Will drenched and trembling from the ongoing snowstorm.

"Sorry I'm... I'm late Dr Lecter..." Will stammered, Hannibal frowned and quickly led the man to sit in front of the fire to warm up, casting a large blanket over his shoulders.

"You don't need to apologise, Will, what were you doing out in a snowstorm?"

"Was... I was looking for abandoned... for abandoned dogs," he sniffled, wiping his face with the blanket, "I set up a... a small heated house for them to sleep in... started snowing halfway through..."

"How'd you get so wet?"

Will looked slightly embarrassed, "I... I fell in the snow trying to lure a dog to my car... so I built the house for him for when I get back to feed him to get my trust..."

"You are a good man, but you could've frozen out there."

"And let... let those dogs do the same...?"

"You need to look after yourself, Will."

"I do look after myself."

Hannibal watched Will's shaking before an idea sparked in his head, an idea to show how he felt about Will, "You need a bath."

"What?"

"You need a bath, it'll warm you up and I can get you some dry clothes."

Will opened his mouth to protest but was carefully bundled up and carried upstairs to the bathroom. Hannibal started to run a bath while keeping an eye on Will, he was still trembling and sweat was beading at his forehead, casting his paling face in a light sheen.

Hannibal reached a hand out for Will's clothes, "May I?"

A quiet nod was all he needed to start disrobing Will, he carefully removed the sopping wet clothes and tossed them aside onto the tile floor before gently lifting Will up and into the warm water.

"You're very strong." Will mused, meeting Hannibal's thoughtful gaze as he started washing the man's hair, earning a stifled groan in response. The noise sent blood south as Hannibal pictured Will pinned underneath him.

"Thank you, you have very nice hair."

"You have nice hands."

"Did you uncover anything with your meeting with Mason?"

"He *admitted it,* but I haven't found anything to pin it on him... I can't just go up to Jack and say that, y'know?"

Hannibal rinsed Will's hair and body, watching how his ears moved back into a more submissive and relaxed pose, "It sounds complicated."

"It is... Do you know anything about Mason?"

"I do," Hannibal casually wrapped Will in a towel and lifted him out of the bath, carrying him into the familiar guest bedroom, "Though I'm not sure you'd enjoy having to attend another event after what happened last time."

Will sighed in appreciation when the warm cotton pyjamas brushed against his bruised body, he warily ran his hand across the back of his neck where the chip was injected.

"Were you a massage therapist before you became a psychiatrist? My shoulder feels great."

"I was a surgeon actually, though I'm glad that you enjoyed the bath."

"That explains how you're able to afford all these nice things on top of inheritance... My *house* could fit inside this guest room."

"It doesn't have to be a guest room, consider it yours whenever you're here."

Hannibal watched as Will fidgeted with his clothes, "Why? I mean, I'm not a vampire, not rich either..."

"I'm not interested in that."

"What *are* you interested in then?"

"You."

"I- Me?" his face flushed, "What do you mean?"

"You're a smart boy, and you have pure empathy. *Empathise with me.* Tell me what I mean."

His eyes met with Hannibal's and he could feel his heart speed up. Will tried to swallow the rising lump in his throat, he couldn't deny his feelings anymore, he definitely was attracted to men. Hannibal closed the gap between the two, he could tell that the feelings he had were mutual, though they both didn't quite know how to go about bringing it to fruition. He decided that he would need to take charge between the two men.

"Tell me, Will."

"You stand out like a lighthouse in the ocean storm... Unphased by the waves of humanity that crash against you, still you prevail against it." Will swiped his tongue across his bottom lip, "Maybe I am the boat that may crash against your rocks of apathy, crying out like a lamb against the wrath of humility, or maybe I am the tidal wave that finally tears down your walls. You can shape us both like Prometheus shaped man from clay, and yet I will still follow you until my muscles give out, and yet I will still continue to follow you."

"How beautiful to find a man that loves like you do Will, without asking for anything in return. A man whom humanity turned their backs on for deviating from the norm, yet still you love unconditionally, you give and you give and you give, yet you never take for yourself. You make life worth living, you are a paragon of the good of man, I'm sure the gods envy you for loving in a world lacking in empathy."

"The gods envy *us*. They envy *us* because we're mortal, because any moment may be our last. Everything is more beautiful because we're doomed. You will never be lovelier than you are now. We will never be here again."

Chapter End Notes

Writing flowery roundabout ways of saying "I love you" are my favourite ways of having characters admit their love for each other.

There's just something so romantic about having a guy say that if the world was ending, that he'd spend the last minutes of existence looking at you. Something that "I love you" just can't cover.

Am I pining? Oh absolutely.

Uprooting the Topsoil

Hannibal looked up from his cooking at Will, who was staring forlornly out the large windows.

"What're you thinking about Will?"

His ears went up at Hannibal's voice, though he didn't turn around like he usually did, "Dogs."

"Beverly is coming around with them for you, they'll be excited to see you again."

"I sometimes think about what my life would've turned out like if I hadn't ran away."

"From your pack?"

"Pack, *family*... What does it matter? Thousands of years of tradition, of *hierarchy.* I was supposed to have my coming of age ceremony, to have the mark of whatever it was that they wanted me to be, another scar to instil pride in. People have such... *superficial ideas* on what they expect people to present themselves as, to the point where they end up projecting."

"You were something different."

"Indubitably. All the more for them to project upon, the only child to survive out of *six,* and it was the runt of the litter."

"Why did they value hunting over caring for the young? Wouldn't that be more beneficial long term?"

"Yeah, but y'know how it is... full of toxic elitism, they'd rather have a strong and *powerful alpha* as the figurehead, cast an intimidating visage to the others. They'd prefer looking unstoppable than compassionate and empathetic to their own."

"The shape of a society must depend on the ethical nature of the individual, and not on any political system however apparently logical or respectable."

Will frowned, but was quickly drawn out of his train of thought by his phone. It was Jack.

"Hello?"

"We've got a lead, there was a survivor of one of the attacks, a girl."

"How old?" He quickly pulled on a large winter coat and hat, "We won't get much from her if she's too traumatised to speak."

"Best guess is around 17-19."

"Got it, I'll be over as fast as I can."

Hannibal followed Will to the car, fixing his hastily tossed on a coat as he went. His theory was now set into motion, and he would be able to gauge just how well Will would adapt to a surrogate. Going off of how fast he was to the car and the anxious tapping of his foot as Hannibal drove, it would have a strong likelihood of succeeding.

Jack greeted the two in the foyer of the hospital, it was obnoxiously white, and the air hung with the scent of disinfectant trying to mask the sickness.

"She's in this room here."

Will inched closer to Hannibal, feeling more at ease when his arm was gently taken ahold of, "Is she awake?"

"Has been for a while, her name is Abigail Hobbs."

He nodded, quietly walking into the room and sitting down at the bed. Abigail looked at Will with wide eyes, and he softened his voice to one that Hannibal could only describe as loving, like a father to his daughter.

"Hi Abigail, my name is Will Graham, I work for the FBI... I'm here to ask you just a few questions about what happened to you, is that ok?"

She nodded, "You're not real FBI though... aren't you? You would've shown me your badge."

"Not technically, no. I'm not in the *official* sense, I'm a consultant."

"Ohh..."

"So can I ask you some questions? I won't push you to do anything you're not comfortable answering, and afterwards, I can get you something from the vending machine, my treat."

"Ok," She smiled at the prospect of sweets, "What do you wanna know?"

"Can you talk me through what happened to you the night you were attacked?"

"I... don't remember much."

"That's alright, even the smallest detail of a crime scene can be profoundly helpful."

Abigail nodded, trying to wrack her mind for anything, "I was... washing the dishes with my dad, I always help with cleaning after dinner... then there was a call, a man at the phone asking to talk to him."

"How did your father react to the call?"

"He... he freaked out, telling me and mum to go hide... I was going to run upstairs when a man... he... he broke through the window and... he *bit her."*

"Take your time Abigail."

"Thanks..." She cleared her bandaged throat, "I um... my dad tried shooting him... but he slashed him with almost... *claws?* Then he um... he..." She gestured to her neck, "He bit me... but I stabbed him... and he ran away."

Will nodded, "Thank you... what would you like from the vending machine? I can get you a can of soda and a bar of chocolate if you want."

Another smile spread across Abigail's face, "I'd like that..."

He got to his feet, "Alright, I won't be too long."

Hannibal smiled to himself, Will had quickly taken to Abigail just as he was hoping.

Jack looked up at Hannibal exiting the room, his posture stiffened, reassuming his position of authority.

"Did she say much?"

"She said that a man called her father and then shortly broke into her house afterwards, apparently he bit her mother's throat and then slashed her father."

"Any description to go off of?"

"Not yet, though she did stab her attacker, if you find the blade there should be his blood on it."

"I'll call Zeller."

Hannibal nodded, watching Will through the window on the door. He was talking to Abigail, showing her photos, no doubt of his fishing.

"Mr Graham?"

Will looked up from his phone in slight surprise, "You don't have to call me that, just Will is fine. Makes me sound super formal if people use Mr Graham."

"Oh right... Will?"

"Yeah?"

"Who was that man that stood behind you when you went in? He was holding your sleeve."

Will glanced at Hannibal and smiled softly, "Him? That's Dr Lecter."

"Is he your boyfriend?"

"I... I'm not sure... We haven't talked about it, but I do *like him."*

Abigail pushed herself to sit more upright, "Listen, I know I'm gonna sound crazy... but I think the guy that attacked my dad was a *vampire..."*

"What makes you think that?"

"Well... His *teeth*... they were so long and... and jagged... *they weren't normal."*

"Did they look like..." Will quickly took out a pen and haphazardly sketched on the back of a tissue, passing it to Abigail, "This?"

"I... *Yes*... how did you know?"

Will pulled down the privacy curtain before pulling off his beanie, letting his ears spring up into the air. Abigail went wide-eyed, staring at his reddish-brown fur as he sat back down.

"That was a vampire, you're not crazy."

"Oh... *Oh my fucking god..."*

"I know I look scary, but-"

"Not that, I just... I thought my dad was crazy... he told me he hunted monsters... they're... *they're real?"*

He nodded, "I'm not going to hurt you though."

"I-I know... he said that werewolves were family-orientated... t-that they pack bond with anything, usually pets."

"I have dogs."

"How many...?"

"8."

"W-Wow..." Abigail chuckled, "You must pay *a lot* in vet bills."

Will cracked a smile, "I do, but it's worth it. They're all good dogs."

Family Bonding

Will was fidgety, more so than usual. Even with his dogs happily at his side again Hannibal noticed that he was on edge, though he couldn't tell what it was that was making him so anxious. He put his knife back into the block and walked over to see what Will was staring at.

"You're making that face again."

"What face?"

"Like you're thinking, but not entirely sure of what you're looking for."

"I suppose not."

Hannibal placed his hands on Will's shoulders, pleased at how he didn't tense at his touch anymore. He had grown accustomed to living with Will, and though he never asked, he found himself waking up every other night to Will wandering into his room and falling asleep next to him. Perhaps it was an instinct, to sleep with members of a pack to protect each other, or maybe Will just wanted to sleep with him but didn't know how to ask.

"Tell me, mangustėli."

"Abigail... I mean... she's an orphan now, and she's probably traumatised at what happened."

"She also knows about monsters, I doubt she can return to normality now that a vampire slaughtered her family."

"What can we do...?"

A thin smile crept across Hannibal's face as his hands moved down from Will's shoulders and instead rested on his hips, he mused at how Will's tail had begun to smack against his leg as it wagged. It was a simple gesture, yet the slight touch was enough to send him from anxious to happy again, all from Hannibal's touch.

"Well... We could take her in, we know more about monsters than the FBI could. Be her surrogate fathers."

Will turned his head to look up at Hannibal, "I'd like that."

"Shall we go visit her then?"

"Not yet, I have a favour to ask first."

"Of course."

"Take this fucking chip *out my neck,"* his face softened, giving Hannibal his best attempt at sad eyes, *"Please?"*

Hannibal nodded, unbuttoning Will's shirt and pulling it down so that it exposed his shoulders. Angry, raised red scratches covered his back - no doubt from Will trying to claw the chip from his neck - he frowned at the scratches, some of which would scar over. More painful reminders littered his body, and these were caused by Hannibal's recklessness. He was going to have to replace those.

"You've had that undignified mark on you for long enough, mano širdie. Go sit on the ottoman and I'll remove it."

He turned to look at Will as he pulled out his surgery equipment, carefully washing his hands and holding them in his sanitised zone, "Are you comfortable?"

"As I'll ever be..."

Hannibal watched as the painkillers began to kick in, he gently tilted Will's head.

"This won't take long."

"Thank you..."

He carefully took his favourite scalpel and pressed it into Will's neck, watching intently at how the blood flowed freely from the wound. He inserted his fingers into the incision, Will cringed from the contact, the feeling of no pain but the pressure of fingers wedged under his skin creeped him out to no end.

"That feels so weird."

"It will, just try to relax for me mylimasis, I shan't take longer than necessary."

"Promise?"

Will felt dumb for even asking for a promise, he knew that Hannibal meant well, but the distrust was so ingrained into his psyche that its mark reared its ugly head whenever the least amount of kindness was presented before him. Hannibal leaned in so that his mouth grazed against Will's throat, leaving a gentle kiss as he lowered his voice.

"I promise."

"O-Ok..."

He pressed further, holding the incision open while he pulled out a pair of tweezers and inserting them. Hannibal pulled, and the microchip came out with his tug. He wiped the blood from Will's back before stitching it close, he gave it another wipe before applying a bandage and pulling off his gloves.

"All done," He showed Will the chip, "here it is."

Will looked apprehensively at the thing in Hannibal's hand, "Good."

"You still look anxious."

"I think I am."

"Why?"

"Why did you do that with my neck...?"

"A kiss, my mylimasis."

The cynical look strewn across Will's face told Hannibal enough, he knew that Will was hurt and mistrusting of the world. He took Will's face in his hands, watching how the boy relaxed under his touch.

"Please, don't lie to me." The pain in Will's voice broke Hannibal's heart, he pulled the boy into his embrace, gently petting Will's curls as he clung desperately to him.

"Mažiuk, it breaks my heart to hear that the world has hurt you." He kissed Will's forehead, "Do you believe me now?"

"I don't know Dr Lecter... I think you might have to do it a few more times before I do."

Abigail smiled when Will and Hannibal entered her room, she was allowed to get up and walk around outside which she was grateful for. She wrapped a scarf around her neck and followed the two outside into the hospital garden, there was a chill in the air that she could feel but doubted that Hannibal or Will could feel. She vaguely recalled her father lecturing her on monsters.

"It's cold out."

Abigail frowned slightly at Will, "My dad said werewolves kept warm with their fur and body fat, how are you *cold?"*

"Most werewolves have a whole pack and eat a lot of meat every day, and I am *not* most werewolves."

"You're a loner, why though? Were you kicked out?"

"I ran away, they wanted a strong and powerful leader, I showed too much *empathy,"* He looked at the freshly lain snow and brushed his shoulder against Hannibal, "I'm sure they don't miss me."

"That's not fair."

Will shrugged, "It's often not, but that's how it's always been within packs."

"I think it was beneficial for Will."

Abigail looked at Hannibal in confusion, "How is getting *kicked out* from your family *beneficial?"*

"He wouldn't have met so many friends at the FBI, he does amazing work saving people from the evil that is beneath the surface of every person."

"And," Will glanced up at Hannibal before linking hands with him, "I wouldn't have met you, or Dr Lecter."

They sat at one of the few benches uncovered by the snow, Will pulled off his coat and cast it across Abigail's shoulders. She looked up at him and shook her head.

"I'm not cold."

"You're shivering," He pulled the coat further over her, "You're going to freeze if we're gonna sit out here to talk."

"You're gonna freeze too, you're just wearing a button-up."

Hannibal gently pulled Will under his coat, smiling innocently at how he blushed from the contact, "I think Mr Graham will be just fine."

She feigned exasperation, wrapping herself tighter in the warm coat. It was made from deer hide and lined with fur, she didn't recognise any particular brand that made coats like it.

"Will?"

"Mhm?"

"Where did you get this? It's the warmest jacket I've ever worn."

He smiled, "I made it, that one was from when I was around your age. You can keep it if you'd like."

A loud buzzing drew Will out of his thoughts and down at his phone, he picked up.

"Jack."

"Hope I'm not interrupting anything, but something's come up."

"What is it?"

"Not our current guy, this time someone's been *mauled...* People think it's a werewolf."

"Werewolf?"

Hannibal shot a look at Will, who shuffled closer under his arm.

"Yeah, I *know* it sounds crazy, but just check it out and let me know who's running around doing this? People are already on edge about the guy ripping out people's throats."

"I know... I'll be over as soon as I can."

Maneater

The smell of death hovered in the air like a swarm of midges in the peak of summer. It clung to everything in the room, leaving its presence known to everyone in its wake. Will crouched down to look at the body - what was left of it - and screwed his face up at the remains, everything about it told him that it was *definitely* a werewolf that had caused it. Though werewolves didn't tend to attack humans, let alone mutilate them beyond recognition, they often didn't feel the need to, wolves were naturally scary to humans.

He smelled the other scent, something else permeated the air other than death, something only he could pick up on. It was earthy and made the hairs on the back of his neck stand on end.

"He's warning us."

Jack looked back at Will from his work, "What do you mean?"

"I mean, *look* at it. They tore this guy to *shreds, he's angry..."*

"Go on."

"He..." his mouth felt dry, "He wants someone to come back, he knows that I would be able to pick up on this and figure it out... It's a message, it spells it out. Pass me a blacklight?"

He took the light from Jack and shone it on the wall, the writing was quite literally on the wall, there was blood that had been used to paint a phrase that Jack read aloud.

"*'Come back to us Will Graham?'* What the hell have you gotten yourself into?"

"It's *family,* I told you I ran away when I was a kid... They must've found out where I ended up thanks to TattleCrime. They want to settle the score."

Jack frowned, "You're going to end up risking your life if you keep working here, I want you exclusively on the ripper and the newer one. Leave this case to Beverly and the others."

"Let me take part Jack, they don't know how the family works."

"You can't be seen at the scenes in case they recognise you."

"I'm *not going into witness protection,* I'll interpret from the sidelines, or through photos - *anything* - just let me work on the case." He pleaded.

"Alright... But *promise* me you won't get too deep, I need you sharp, and this whole family business you've got going on is gonna end up distracting you. *I can't afford* to have you distracted."

"I'll ensure that dear Will stays on track." A voice from behind announced, Jack looked up at Hannibal and smiled.

"Dr Lecter, I didn't see you come in."

"My apologies Agent Crawford, Will and I were visiting Abigail when he was called here. I ended up being later than I had anticipated."

"Of course," He turned back to talk to Will, "I'll send you the photos, let me know if you find anything, and just focus on the ripper, ok?"

"Yeah, thanks, Jack."

"There has to be *something* to pin Mason to the killings, what about his DNA?"

Hannibal picked up his pencil and rounded out the edges of his drawing, "Vampire venom reacts to their DNA, makes it so they can't be traced."

"For fucks sake."

"Get inside his head, he's arrogant, use that to your advantage mano meilė. You're closer to a breakthrough than you let yourself believe."

"You're suggesting I bait him."

"You're an extremely intelligent individual, you know how he thinks."

"He's going to want to show off, *brag* to us that he can get away with it."

"So what're you going to do about it?"

"Taunt him, say it's amateur... It'll piss him off and put a target on my back, once I conveniently end up alone, that's when the FBI comes in and arrests him."

"You told me about the Chesapeake Ripper, how he's obsessed with you. What makes you think he won't try and take his chances if you're alone?"

"He doesn't want to *hurt* me, if he wanted to talk to me or confess or whatever he's planning... then he'd do so through his art, or ask me in person. I'm not a difficult person to impress."

Hannibal raised an eyebrow, "You'd accept the ripper's advances?"

"You know what I mean," Will sighed and rubbed his face, "I... I'm just not thinking straight after that attack."

"Would you like to talk about it?"

"No."

He looked up, not paying attention to Hannibal rising to his feet and making his way towards him. He was lost in thought since he read the message, he had escaped his family for a

decade, only for it to all crumble apart with his rising notoriety. He supposed it was inevitable, though he couldn't just run like last time, he had a job, friends, relationships.

"The first step of healing from trauma is to talk about it."

"Then I guess I'm never healing."

"Sit, let's talk about it."

Will sighed but relented, sitting across from Hannibal's leather seat. Hannibal didn't sit down, however, instead, he approached behind and placed his hands on Will's head, running his hands through the soft brown curls.

"Ok Dr Lecter, I guess you want me to *start at the beginning?"*

"We'll address your inferiority complex first and foremost, and how that has manifested in demonstrating masochistic behaviours in order to shield yourself from it."

"I *don't* have an inferiority complex."

"No? Then why are you often so reluctant to accept gifts from people? Preferring to give thoughtful gifts and perpetuate grand acts of charity, taking in abandoned animals, handcrafting Beverly a violin bow when you barely knew her. Yet you'd rather let yourself freeze to death than accept help from others, why do you think that is?"

Will frowned, "If you know so much about how I think then why not just tell me?"

"That's not how it works, if you don't realise why you behave the way you do by yourself, then you're not accepting it, are you?"

"I know, I'm a pain in the ass for any psychologists *stupid* enough to try and figure out why I'm like this. I don't like getting things because I'm *afraid*, ok? I'm afraid of getting close to people, I'm afraid of having a partner, I'm afraid that the people around me will get hurt when my family inevitably show up. All *this* happened because I decided to walk into a museum and talk to Jack, now I can't just *run away from it all* like I usually do, I let my guard down and let people in and now everyone's lives are in danger because I was reckless."

"Mylimasis, how long have you been keeping yourself away from relationships?"

"Since I was 18."

"And your age now?"

"32."

"Have you not experimented?"

A look of embarrassment spread across Will's previously annoyed face, *"What?"*

"You had a most poetic way of describing your feelings, though what am I to you?"

"I don't *want* to run away, I *want* to be with you, I want *you."*

Hannibal kissed Will, it startled him at first, but he wouldn't back down from his feelings, he leaned into the kiss, allowing Hannibal to pursue further. He looked up at Dr Lecter, his face flushed red and his mouth slightly agape.

"I love you, mangustėli. I would be your lighthouse in the storm of your past, I can't think of any greater happiness than to be with you all the time, though I feel though there is no place in this world that is undisturbed for our love, not here nor anywhere else. I would love you as though you were the oxygen I breathe if you'd let me."

"Ma raison d'être, I love you endlessly."

"French..." Will's words easily echoed in Hannibal's mind, the way the words danced on his tongue was enough to make Hannibal want to give in and take the man now, "Such a beautiful language, I would love to take you to France sometime."

"Hey, maybe once this is all over." Will chuckled, "Maybe we could sit at the louvre together, though the art wouldn't compare to you."

"These recent killings are the work of an *amateur,* someone who kills without any regard for *subtlety or finesse,* he so desperately wants to be seen as the next Chesapeake ripper yet lacks anything that makes the ripper intimidating. It's *sad*, really."

Mason saw red, he couldn't stand being compared to the ripper - he was better, only he could elevate the *pathetic* clay of humans into something worth looking at - he was going to prove it to Will, even if it meant killing him and all the clay he ever held dear to him.

Margot stepped out from the back of the limousine and into the bureau, she didn't care for the mind games that Mason was oh so eager to play with Will, he knew that he was setting himself up for failure from the get-go, going toe to toe with a werewolf - especially one as astute as Will with a clinical sense of morality to match - was like bringing a spoon to a gunfight, and she wasn't wanting to stick around and watch her brother try and take on the mongoose that Hannibal had at his side, she stopped at Alana's office, listening in on her and Will.

"Say it works, and the killer takes the bait," Alana asked, sitting down at her desk, "You're putting yourself into an incredibly dangerous situation Will, what if he hurts you?"

"I have my gun, and besides, I'd prefer he take on someone that can actually fight back."

"Does *Jack* know?"

"He's the one that helped broadcast it for me, he's going to have agents watching from a distance, anything happens that could go wrong will be taken care of by them."

"Mr Graham?"

Will looked up at where the voice came from and frowned when Margot entered the room. He was still bitter over the sheer disdain that he was treated with, being made to sit in the car.

"What do you want Margot?"

"You know her?"

Will looked back at Alana and nodded, "Margot Verger, this is Dr Alana Bloom, Alana, Margot."

"Nice to meet you Ms Verger."

"Please, the pleasure is *mine*, Dr Bloom."

"Aren't you meant to be bugging that serial killer, Will?"

Will made a noise resembling a grumble before nodding to Alana, he made his way out of her office, stopping to glower at Margot.

"You might be trying to get your way to Alana, she may not know what *you* are, but *I do."* He growled.

"Funny," Margot mused, "I could almost say the same thing about you."

Reunion

Will's ears pricked to the sounds around him, it wasn't an equal fight and both men knew it. Will had an edge, his senses were far more attuned to his surroundings even with his hearing dampened by his hat, and paired with years of fighting and running under his belt and a gun in his hands, Mason was well aware that he'd have his work cut out for him if he went toe to toe with the werewolf.

He plucked a dart from his bag - not enough to kill Will, though it was enough to even the score enough for him to kill the man - and slid it into the dispenser.

"Good evening Will."

"Oh, Mr Verger." Will smiled politely, "What're you doing out so late?"

"You know why."

"Do I?"

"You compared me to the ripper! I'm much more than him and you know it!"

"I don't believe I did, I recall comparing *the serial killer* to a pitiful attempt of trying to be the ripper. They both think of humans the same way, that they're cattle, but the other killer lacks the ability to see through that." A smile crept across Will's face, "If you say that *you're* the killer, then I'm afraid I'm going to have to turn you in."

Mason faltered, "Well, I've got to hand it to you Will, you've played by all the little rules that you follow like an obedient little puppy, I half expected you to commit even a little felony to get to me."

"Where's the fun in that?"

"Where *is* the fun in that? You could've been *anything* you *ever* wanted to be, you could be the FBI's little attack dog if you love *that* so much. Yet here you are, pretending to be something you're not."

"Maybe I am hiding."

"Why? You could be *feared*, *respected* by them. I could make you powerful... if you just let this go."

"Power?"

"Yes, you can join my empire, and I will make you a *very* rich man. You could afford that house you keep looking at, the one that has that big garden for your dogs. All I ask is for your blood, sweat, and respect."

Will nodded, tossing his gun to the side and holding his hand out for Mason. He smiled slyly, taking Will into a hug and parting his lips, he dipped his head to tear open Will's neck but was met with a hand tightly clamped around his neck and lifting him up into the air.

"What was that last bit Mr Verger? Blood, sweat, and respect?" He gestured, the agents circling him and Mason, "First two you give, last one you need to earn."

"You've made... A *fatal* mistake, Will..." Mason hissed, "I'll hunt you down..."

"You're not the first to say that."

"Maybe... Though your friends should know *the truth."*

Will stared out the window, a position Hannibal was all too used to seeing him in as of late. It offered him a pleasant view of Will's back, allowing him to take in the dimensions of his body, enjoying the main attraction of him from behind.

"You enjoy feeding people." He stated, breaking Hannibal's stare and their mutual silence.

"Yes."

"Why?"

"I grew up in poverty with my sister, we never knew when our next meal would be. When she passed away I vowed that I wouldn't allow people that I care about to go through the same food insecurities as I once did."

"You had a sister?"

"A long time ago."

"Ah..."

Hannibal could tell Will was feeling awkward around the subject, he never enjoyed talking about family, whether it was his or anyone else, his eyes darted around the room before settling on the large black harpsichord.

"Do you like it?"

"What is it? It looks like a piano but..." He tapped one of the keys, scrunching his nose at the tin-like noise it emitted, "That's not a piano sound."

"It's a harpsichord, it was invented before the piano was, during the baroque era."

Will played a chord, "I have a piano."

"Do you play?"

"I used to, I haven't really had the time to do so thanks to the ripper case. I'm not that good at it to be honest."

He walked over to the harpsichord and sat down, gently pulling Will down so he was sat on his lap, much to Will's flustered surprise.

"Show me what you can do mažasis."

"I... *Jesus*, you know how to be forward with a guy."

"I don't see why we must dance around the subject of showing how we feel about each other."

Will sighed and leaned back, kissing Hannibal's jaw, "You're right, now show me how to play the harp... harpsh... this *thing*, before I get interested in something *else* of yours."

"Is that a threat or a promise?"

"Haven't decided yet."

Hannibal leaned forward and held Will's hands in his own, moving them towards the keys. His hands were rough from constant work, fishing and repairs around his home, but had a delicate poise about them that Hannibal admired.

"Let's start with something simple, to help your muscle memory warm up."

He set Will's hands down on the keys, helping him play a few chords, he watched as Will moved from under his hands, picking up on the song he was playing.

"Bach?"

"My own composition, you filled in a few blanks that I was stuck on."

"You're a wonderful composer you know," Will toyed with Hannibal's hair, sighing, "I really can't just run away this time, can I?"

"I'm afraid not."

"Thought so..."

"Will you be getting off of my lap?"

"Don't be ridiculous Dr Lecter."

"Again with Dr Lecter..." Hannibal feigned a sad look, "won't you call me Hannibal, širduk?"

"Your puppy eyes aren't as good as mine," Will teased, turning around so he was straddling Hannibal's lap, "but let me indulge you... *Hannibal."*

Will sat outside with Abigail, the snow had started to melt with the promise of spring at its heels, creating a slush mix that the two of them didn't enjoy. Abigail kicked up a chunk of ice, sending it skiting across the snow and exploding into a thousand shining fragments against a tree.

"Spring should be soon."

"Good for the fish," Will gestured to the lake, "Catfish tend to lay eggs there, should be nice to go fishing there sometimes."

"Will you show me how?"

"Of course, can't be harder than hunting, no? You have the bait, you be patient, and when they go for it... you strike."

"I suppose... but the prey my dad showed me how to hunt were more..." She pointed at Will, "similar to you."

"Yeah... how's your neck?"

"Healed, they said that I was lucky he missed my artery."

"That's good... murder is... it's one of the most ugly things you could do."

Abigail looked at Will incredulously, "You're always comparing the ripper's killing to art."

"The ripper is-" Will cut himself off, looking around the garden, "did you hear that?"

"Hear what? Your hearing is miles better than a human, just so you know."

The noises became more recognisable for Will as they approached, the heavy footsteps of years of violence that rang in his ears carried a man with about as much poise and dexterity as a sledgehammer. He pulled Abigail behind him defensively, watching as the figure of a man stepped into the clearing, Will sneered.

"Of course, can't do the dirty work *himself* so he brings *you*. What do you want Matthew?"

"Harsh, don't you know how to greet an old friend?"

"You're not my *friend*. The light from friendship won't reach us for a million years. *That's* how far away from friendship we are."

Matthew feigned hurt, "Did we really leave on such bad terms, cher?"

"Yes."

"Is there nothing I can do to fix that?" He stepped forwards, quickly stopping when Will drew his gun on him, "come now, let's not do something we'll all regret."

"Fuck you, Matthew. You *lied* to me. You lied and you *lied and you lied* and I, like an *idiot*... I *believed* you. Well, guess what *cher?* I'm not who I once was anymore. I *will* pull this goddamn trigger, and *I will kill you.*" Will snarled, "Did we mean anything to you? Did *I* mean anything to you? Or was I just a way for you to get ahead?"

"You mean the *world*-"

"Oh, shut up with the theatrics, I'm not so easily manipulated by flowery words and base level *pity*." He spat, "Be a good boy and turn around. If you know what's good for you, you'll turn around with your tail between your legs and you'll tell my father or whoever the *hell* is the alpha that *I am not to be contacted again."*

Matthew frowned, "You have a child?"

Will bristled, holding Abigail close to him. She debated running to Hannibal, though she doubted she could outrun a werewolf, especially considering how much larger Matthew was in comparison to Will.

"Mylimasis, are you alright?"

"I'm fine Hannibal, just dealing with something."

Hannibal stood beside Will, watching how Matthew's face became one of bitter jealousy. He placed his hand on Will's shoulder, intentionally trying to cause a provocation.

"Who is this?"

"He's no one, let's just go back inside."

"The gun in your hand doesn't suggest no one," Hannibal looked up at Matthew, "you must be one from Will's old pack."

"You're a vampire."

"An astute observation."

Matthew sneered at Will, "Your father won't be pleased to see you shacked up with a *bloodsucker*, and sharing a *human* child together? Oh, I'll send your message alright, but you'll *never* be able to live a normal life, or whatever you call *this*, again."

Hannibal watched as Matthew skulked off back into the woods before turning to Will and Abigail, he pulled them close protectively, internally impressed at how Will asserted his dominance over Matthew in order to protect Abigail. If he could get the boys pack out of the picture, he could have Will all to himself, though he'd need to convince him to stop chasing after the Chesapeake Ripper.

If he could point Will in the direction of an old friend, perhaps it would keep him distracted long enough for him to make arrangements.

Tease

It was late at night when Hannibal's door opened, he put his book down to look up at the intrusion to make eye contact with a very startled looking Will.

"Oh, I uh... didn't know you were awake."

"I was doing a bit of late reading, I thought you went to sleep a few hours ago?"

The sides of Will's cheeks flushed red, obviously trying to think of a lie, "I had a nightmare, went to get water when I saw your light on."

"Come sit, you can talk to me about it."

"Alright..." Will sat next to Hannibal and craned his neck to look at the book, "Dante's Inferno?"

"I enjoy reading the Divine Comedy, it starts in Inferno, then Purgatorio, and ends in Paradiso."

"I read some of it, it was interesting reading how Dante described hell."

"The nine circles, each getting progressively worse as they ventured deeper, ending with fraud."

"Dante viewed fraud as the worst possible sin," Will stated. He nestled further into the bed, lying down so that his head was resting on Hannibal's chest, "He viewed it as a sin of intellect. Man using his intelligence to abuse the trust of the victim, he thought that trusting others was an important quality of humans and by betraying it you'd be betraying god's creation."

Hannibal looked down at Will and pulled the blanket over him, there was something intrinsically comforting about the weight from Will's head resting on his chest. It was in essence just like Dante had described, to be able to love like a human could was one of the purest forms of love, undying and alight with a passion that threatened to burn anyone that got too close, yet perfectly warm to the two of them.

"Were you born a monster?"

"Not quite, when my sister died I went looking for my family. I was picked up by a group of hunters who helped track down a distant aunt and uncle, they took me in and made me into the man I am today."

"Oh..." Will went quiet again, leaning into Hannibal's hand as he began petting the man's hair.

"What about you?"

"Born, it's all I've ever known." He sighed, "Had everything quite literally *presented* to me from birth... and I threw it away."

"Why is that?"

The noise that followed his question told Hannibal enough about how Will felt.

"I *told* you why."

"You told me a clouded version of events," He corrected, "I want to know more about you."

Will a noise akin to a huff, "Didn't know that being a *mind reader* was part of being a vampire."

"You're avoiding the question."

"If I knew that dating a psychiatrist would involve romantic nights psychoanalysing each other's traumas, maybe I would've pushed my car home."

"You wouldn't."

There was a pause, and Will shifted his head to get more comfortable, "Yeah... I wouldn't."

"So tell me."

"Ok... It was the scars, I spent my entire life having these marks all over my body. They're just *constant* reminders of what I'm *meant* to be, what I'm not... I don't want to be a leader, but my dad wouldn't accept it. He wanted me mated and ready to rear kids to continue the line, I wasn't ready for it, *especially* not with how young I was; don't get me wrong, I'm happy that we took in Abigail, and I *love* children now, but at 16? I could barely control my *shifting* by then, let alone having children."

"They shouldn't have forced you like that."

"Yeah, then came the whole judgement, demanding to know why I wouldn't have any. I *tried* to them that I wasn't ready, but they just didn't care, it was like I had no authority over my own body, just something to dump the nearest werewolf in front of and create a kid."

"Is that where Matthew came into play?"

Will nodded, "Hence them sending *him* to come bring me back."

"What then?"

"Got another scar for refusing, it must've sent me over the edge - I dunno - I just flew off the handle... I bit the guy that did it, and I ran."

Hannibal kissed Will, pulling him so that he was now straddling Hannibal. Will shifted to get comfortable in the new position, but the angle that Hannibal had his hips at didn't grant him

much in that aspect, rather they made him press his ass against an area of Hannibal's body that he tried to avoid, but ended up futile.

"What's the matter mažiuk? You look very flushed all of a sudden."

Hannibal stirred from his sleep with Will sprawled out on top of him, he admired the way the boy's hair fell in front of his face as he slept, it was peaceful. He brushed Will's hair up, smiling at the tired noises that escaped.

"I'm not getting up..." Will groaned.

"I'm afraid you'll have to, but will sausages and egg scramble help you ease into the day?"

"Coffee too?"

"Of course, you're going to have to get off of me to let me cook for you."

Will wrapped his arms around Hannibal tighter and grumbled, he screwed his face up when Hannibal lifted him up and carried him downstairs.

"Hey, what're you doing?"

"You weren't letting go anytime soon, so I'm carrying you downstairs."

"Oh," Will hummed and kissed Hannibal's cheek, "how romantic of you, cher."

A smile spread across Hannibal's face as he sat Will down in the kitchen, Will got up from the seat and wrapped his arms around Hannibal from behind, he was tired, but still made a quiet grumbling, almost purring noise as he watched contently.

"You're in a cuddly mood today, what's gotten into you?"

"Maybe I just want to hug."

"Alright," Hannibal added some salt and pepper to the eggs, "talk to me."

"Seeing Matthew again... It was *weird*, I never really was able to properly close that chapter of my life. It's not like I want to go back to them, but..." he sighed, "I want *answers* or *closure*... I don't know."

"What do you hope to gain from opening that back up?"

"I hope for acceptance, I want them to just accept that I'm happy and I have... I have a family now, as much as I hate to say it Hannibal, but you've managed to make me feel sappy... *domestic."*

"Oh?"

"Mhm. Don't get too cocky about it."

"I'll try my best, brangusis."

Abigail made her way into the kitchen and sat down at the island, she watched as Hannibal and Will murmured to each other in languages she didn't understand, but she assumed it was romantic and cloying. She didn't fully understand the dynamic between the two, or how the relationship between the two managed to get past the strangers' phase to this point; her father always told her about the strain between vampires and werewolves, both having wildly different cultures and even religions.

"How was your sleep, Abigail?" Hannibal asked, turning around to pass her a plate of breakfast, she nodded politely.

"Thank you... It was good, a lot better than the hospital beds."

"That's good to hear."

"Can I ask you two something?"

"What is it?"

"You and Will, no offence, but my dad told me that vampire/werewolf friendships don't often work due to how your guys' way of life conflicts with each other."

"That's true," Will admitted, "I think if I had met Dr Lecter when I first ran away I wouldn't have liked him."

"What changed?"

Will sat down, "I met the people I call my friends, I saw how much life had to offer me working and actually enjoying myself. There weren't any expectations tossed onto me from birth, people liked me for who I was as a *person*, not because of who I was born to, people genuinely liked *me."*

Hannibal kissed Will's head, making Abigail giggle when his ears sprung up.

"You've come a long way."

"We all have."

Beverly smiled at Will and waved him over to the scene. He pulled his jacket tighter and smiled back as warmly as he could despite the chill.

"Hey, you're looking chipper."

"Thanks, Beverly, I feel a lot happier recently too."

"Who are you and what have you done with the real Will?" She teased, lightly elbowing his arm, "What's made you so cheerful and where can I get a shot?"

"I'm... I think I'm dating someone."

"You *think?"*

"I *am,* it just doesn't feel *real,* you know?"

"Ohh... yeah, I get what you mean."

Will brushed a stray hair under his hat and sighed, Beverly passed him some photos.

"The ripper?"

"Weirdly enough, no. He's not been as active as before, it's making Jack upset, he wants him caught so he can figure out if Miriam Lass is still alive or not."

"Who then?"

Beverly tapped the photos, "That werewolf one, it's why we're talking here and not to Jack."

"Oh," Will's face fell, he looked at the photos, frowning more, "that bastard, why can't he just talk to me like a normal guy?"

"Tell me about him, I can dig up something on the guy for you."

"It's dangerous."

"That's why we're in this profession Will."

He nodded, "Matthew Brown is who you're probably looking for... He was *supposed* to be my partner, we were expected to be *soulmates* or whatever the word is for it. We got along, I *really* liked him for a while... then he got really pressuring about children, so I left the pack."

"Gotta go, Jack's calling. Take a look at the photos, let me know if you find anything and text me it, ok?"

"Yeah..."

Beverly smiled, heading back to Jack and leaving Will alone with the photos, he looked down at them and grimaced. He didn't know it was possible to dismember people so violently, but the completely caved in skulls told him more than enough about how Matthew was feeling. He headed back to the car where Hannibal was waiting for him and sat down with a heavy sigh.

"Not good?"

"Very... Matthew's pissed, killed three guys, at least that's what they think." He waved the photos around, "Barely goddamn identifiable thanks to him."

"Maybe he's jealous."

Will looked at Hannibal incredulously, "Of what?"

"He thought you two would become a pair, and here you are happily dating another man with a child. You're living the life he was told he would have with you without him, he must be quite upset that he ruined his chances."

"Oh..." He paused and nodded, "I suppose that's as decent of a reason as any."

"You're more jumpy than usual, what's bothering you?"

"All these cases cropping up everywhere, people are going to find out about monsters if these killings keep at the same rate." He sighed, "Why can't it just be *simple?"*

"It seems the ripper has gone dormant too."

"Yeah... how'd you know?"

"The photos you bring back don't have his flair, the ripper has more finesse, these are too messy for his style. Like you've said before."

"Right, yeah..." Will rubbed his eyes and pulled his beanie off, "Jeez... I think I'm stressed out."

"What can I do to alleviate some of that stress?"

"Wine?"

"I can do that."

The wine was relieving, washing across Will's palate as he sipped at the dark red liquid.

"How's the wine?"

"It's really good, thank you."

"Have you ever tried wine tasting?"

"Hmmm... No, I'm more of an *'if it tastes good and says wine on the label I'll drink it'* type of guy."

"Sip it slower, tell me what you taste as you savour it."

Will swirled the wine in his mouth and hummed receptively when Hannibal refilled his glass.

"Fruity, kinda... plum?" He sipped again, a light blush dusting his face, "Ooh, *that's nice..."*

"I brew them myself," Hannibal savoured his own glass, admiring the blend of flavours, "we could sample them until we find your favourite."

"Together?"

"Together."

Will grinned and linked arms with Hannibal, "Lead the way then, mon plaisir quotidien."

"Of course, mangustėli."

Glasses were filled and drained with different wines, reds, whites, champagnes. Each mouthful made Will's face get redder and redder as he got progressively tipsier and tipsier, he drank the glass that Hannibal passed to him and the haze that surrounded his brain lifted slightly.

"What was that one?"

"Water, I think you've had your fair share of wines tonight."

"What? No, I'm just getting started! Just you watch *Dr Lecter,* I can drink you under the table."

"We're both quite intoxicated, I think it's best if we have more water."

"How come you're using fancy words then?"

"Werewolves get drunk faster, but you get sober faster too, vampires take longer with it lasting longer too. I've been regulating my intake with water, you should too."

Will drank more of the water and blinked, "Why do you know so much about werewolf biology anyways?"

"I used to be a surgeon, remember? I need to know the ins and outs of every monster as well as human."

A sly grin spread across Will's face, "I can think of one area of being a werewolf you don't know about, however, I'd gladly *show you."*

"And what area is that Will?"

"Sex."

Hannibal's eyes darkened.

Sipping on Ambrosia

Chapter Notes

> Heads up: This entire chapter is all just sex, there's absolutely no plot development going on, it's just Hannibal and Will rawdogging it in the bedroom.
>
> I haven't written explicit scenes like these in ages, so try to go easy on me lol
>
> Skip this chapter if you don't wanna read the two of them boning
>
> Or do, I can't stop you

Hannibal had taken a fistful of Will's hair and pressed him up against the wall, eliciting a surprised squeak from Will as the force of being manhandled startled him.

"Do you know what I'm going to do to you?"

"I... Dr Lecter..."

"I need your permission."

Will swallowed, nodding shakily.

"Good."

Hannibal moved towards Will's neck, watching as his adams apple bobbed with every shaky breath. He grazed his teeth against the mans scarred skin, feeling pleased when his action made Will grapple his shirt with a timid noise. Hannibal knew that Will was used to scars having painful memories, a boy used to pain meaning something bad, something to hide away from and be ashamed of. He pressed his fangs deeper, breaking the skin and allowing blood to flow to the surface, pouring over and into his mouth.

A list of expletives rattled out alongside a mix of whimpers from Will's mouth as his brain shut down, everything about what was happening was uncharted territory that couldn't be rationalised away like a profile. The burning from his neck eased as Hannibal cupped Will's face in his hands, gently rubbing his thumbs across the man's cheeks.

"Will?"

He blinked, not entirely sure he heard Hannibal correctly, "Huh...?"

"Tell me what you're thinking about."

"I don't... I don't know," he admitted, "I've never done... *this* before."

"How did that feel?"

"Hurt... but good..."

Hannibal smiled, "You were very brave, I'd like to do more, but I'll need your permission again."

"What... What does *'more'* entail...?"

His eyes dragged up and down Will's trembling body, "Let's see about that offer."

Hannibal knew that for werewolves, lying on their backs or exposing their necks was the biggest show of trust, showing a vulnerable area that could easily get them killed when in the wild. He knew that Will was on edge just sitting on his bed, he still wasn't fully sure of what to expect, and being nude didn't exactly help.

"Are you comfortable?"

"About as comfortable as a deer in the headlights of a truck."

"That's to be expected," Hannibal rolled his sleeves up, keeping an eye on Will's face for any negative reaction, "Are you sure you want me to do this? I won't get offended if you'd prefer some other form of sexual intimacy."

"I'm sure."

"Very well, however, if you ever change your mind during this, I want you to say red, or if you're unsure, you can say amber."

"Like a traffic light?"

"Yes, it's a way of communicating your needs. I may be the one on top of you, but you have the power over this interaction, if you say red, I'll stop. No questions asked."

Will visibly relaxed, "Oh right... Thank you, that makes me feel less nervous."

"Of course, Will. Shall I start?"

He nodded, "Yes."

Hannibal touched Will, it was light enough for him to feel, but not enough to make him get anything from it, and the shaky whine that escaped Will's throat begged him to take the boy right there and then, but he had to make sure Will enjoyed himself as much as he was going to enjoy him. He kissed Will, pleased at how eager the response was and pushed back to admire how patient Will was trying to be for him.

"You're behaving so well for me mylimasis," he cooed, "What colour are you at?"

"Green... please Dr Lecter, I-"

Will held onto the hand that covered his mouth, unsure of what else to do except watch as his legs were carefully parted and a pair of fingers met at his lower half.

"This is going to feel unpleasant at first, but try to keep your body relaxed. I assure you it'll be far more unpleasant if I don't use my fingers first."

The finger was pushed inside, and Will made a smorgasbord of noises and expletives.

"A-Amber, amber holy *shit amber."*

Hannibal stopped to massage Will's head with his free hand, allowing him to control his breathing and relax. As eager as he was to be closer with Hannibal than before, he severely underestimated how sex worked between men, the videos he had watched as a teen was nothing compared to the real-life equivalent.

"You're alright, take your time."

"No one told me it'd feel like *that..."*

"It's a lot more different than with a woman, isn't it?"

"Oh yeah, very different."

"How do you feel now?"

"Green."

"You're sure?"

"I'm sure."

Hannibal moved his other finger in and watched for Will's reaction, the sharp inhale and grimace was enough to tell him to slow down, so he did.

"You look uncomfortable."

"What gave it away?" Will laughed dryly, "Can I not take a painkiller or something?"

"You can, but I'd rather you not take a strong one in case you damage something and you're unable to feel it."

"You make *too much* sense sometimes..."

"I'm afraid it's my job to do so, whenever you're ready mano meile, I'll make sure you're alright."

He took a deep breath and eyed Hannibal's dick, he pulled a face and held Hannibal tighter, "Go for it, I've had worse... I can take it."

Will could not, in fact, take it.

His grip on Hannibal's arms was so tight that he was starting to break the skin, causing blood to pool down his hands. Hannibal pried the boy's hands off of him and tried to shush the swear-riddled whimpers that spilled like his blood.

"Mylimasis, you're alright, just breathe."

"Je vas te passe une calotte, I'm trying, ok? " Will squirmed and looked embarrassed at his sudden outburst, "Sorry cher."

"It's alright, it's normal for bilingual people to alternate between the two in certain situations, it's also quite normal for people to swear - it's your first time - it's natural."

"Alright..." He took another breath and slowly allowed his body to relax against the intrusion, *"Jesus,* alright... I'm ok now."

Hannibal moved his hips forwards and Will covered his mouth, his face burning a deep shade of red. He started working at a gentle pace, loosening up and trying to coax a noise from the boy, but the hand was still clamped. His own hand went on top of Will's, pulling them off and pinning them to the sides of the bed.

"Let's try that one again."

"But I-" He was cut off with a sudden shove, a noise escaped from him and he swore, only for Hannibal to repeat the movement.

"Much better."

Hannibal felt a tinge of pride as the sounds of Will's moans filled the room, he picked up the pace, making sure the boy never got too used to a certain action or speed. He ran his thumb over where he had bitten just a few moments before, admiring how it started to heal over already, it was going to leave a scar that Will won't quickly forget.

"Jesus *Christ,* H-Hannibal..." Will spluttered.

"You're doing well mylimasis."

With all the guile Will had, his mind had completely shut down. All the whispers of praise, the feelings of pleasure that rocked his body in waves as Hannibal moved. It was overwhelming, and his stomach had balled up tightly, his grip on the bedsheets grew tighter until his knuckles went white.

"Oh god, *please,* I..."

"Tell me."

"Jesus, I- I'm..." He whined, letting out another noise as his hair got tugged.

Will buckled, the knot in his stomach released like an elastic band being let go, his mind blanked as he came. Hannibal wasn't long behind, the foreign feeling of hot liquid pooling inside him as he stared up at Hannibal's dark eyes, both their pupils were blown wide, and he sighed when Hannibal pulled out to lie down next to him.

"I think that was a very beneficial demonstration on werewolf sex."

"I need a drink."

The Whistleblowers

Will stepped into the shower and sighed when the hot water hammered down on his skin, his body ached and he dunked his head under the stream of the showerhead, appreciative of the water pressure at Hannibal's home. He was lucky to even get lukewarm water at his house back in Wolf Trap, he hummed as he worked trying to scrub the scent of wet dog off of him; he supposed that was a negative of being a werewolf, that or the more doglike behaviours he had now that he was effectively *'domesticated'*.

He watched as the grime ran off of his body, he didn't realise just how dirty he let himself get when he scrubbed the soap into his skin, he scrunched his face up imagining how dirty his ears and tail had gotten.

"You've been in the shower for quite a while," came Hannibal's voice, "Are you alright?"

"Yeah, I just..." he looked down, "Fur, you know?"

"Do you require help?"

Will's face darkened in embarrassment, "I don't know, I think so..."

The door opened and Hannibal looked at Will, taking his own clothes off before stepping in with him. Will looked around for anything to look at other than down, or up for that matter, he nearly leapt out of his skin when Hannibal touched his ears.

"Sorry, mažiuk."

"It's alright, I..." he trailed off as his thinking slowed down to a halt, he leaned into Hannibal's hands as they gently massaged his ears, "I..."

"Dogs have a lot of nerve endings in their ears, it's why they enjoy having them massaged, did you know?"

"Huh...?"

"I assume you're having the same reaction just now, aren't you?"

Will hummed and closed his eyes, "Feels good."

Hannibal lathered a good amount of soap on his hands and began working it into Will's fur, rinsing it out periodically until they showed off a more rust coloured coat. He admired his work, having scrubbed every inch of dirt off of the boy until he was left much paler than before.

"There you go, how's that?"

"Holy *shit,"* Will felt his face and looked at his reflection in the mirror, "I thought I had a tan."

Hannibal wrapped the two of them in a towel and stepped out of the shower, letting Will look at himself more closely.

"How did you usually wash?"

"I uh, I didn't have a lot of water pressure, or hot water now that I think about it..." He avoided looking at Hannibal, "I used soap though, if *that's* what you're implying."

"That's not what I'm implying," Hannibal walked into the bedroom, "I wanted to gauge your living situation before we met."

Will pulled his towel off and shook his body violently, sending water splattering all over the room and on Hannibal.

"I survived, that's enough for me."

A towel was wrapped around Will again, Hannibal gave him an empathetic look as he dried the boy's hair.

"You don't need to, you can let yourself enjoy nice things. Let me prepare a dinner party, this time you won't be late in the snow because of a dog, hmm?"

He looked up at Hannibal and frowned, "Who are you going to invite?"

"A few friends."

"Vampires?"

He was still bitter over their interaction at the vampiric event Hannibal took him to, the feeling of having the microchip removed was permanently ingrained into his brain. Hannibal shook his head.

"Mostly human, though a few monsters, you'll get along with them though."

He huffed resentfully but nodded, "Fine."

Will gestured to the board, "Upon closer inspection of the corpse, what do you notice about the extremities?"

A hand went up and he nodded, "The um... The fingers they..."

"Don't worry, the answer is very much representitive of Occam's razor."

"They're not blue?"

"Correct, cyanosis - which is when your body turns blue - usually occurs only 60 seconds after death, yet these are still relatively pink. So, what is the only option you can discern?"

"You said the body was stiff... like rigor mortis, so it can't be fresh..."

Will nodded and smiled, "Very good."

"So it must've been poison, like... Cyanide."

"Right again, well done." He smiled proudly, "Cyanide binds to oxygen in your cells, which can, in turn, prevent cyanosis after death. Another telltale sign of cyanide poisoning is the scent of *almonds*, it-"

Will looked at Jack and back at the class, "Sorry... I'll put a documentary on for you all about cyanide poisoning from a toxicology team in Taiwan, take some notes as it plays, and write a report on what you learn for..." He looked at his calendar, "Let's say two weeks today?"

The class murmured in agreement as Will headed out the room with Jack, he furrowed his brows as he followed him outside.

"Where are we walking to?"

"Not far."

They trekked up a hill and stopped at the mouth of a forest, Will looked around, expecting a body, an investigation, anything. But all that was there was the vast glen that they were stood at, nothing but the hiss of the wind, he pulled his coat tighter.

"Beverly found that suspect you told her about, Matthew?"

He looked anxious, "Is she ok?"

"Yes, but that's not what I'm asking about..." Jack paced the dirt and sighed, "I want you to keep this off the record, ok?"

"Alright..."

"Monsters are real, the FBI just went and confirmed it."

He nodded along, playing dumb and Jack continued.

"They're planning on announcing it slowly... But..." He turned to look at Will, "I don't want to believe it."

"It's a *massive* discovery, it's natural for-"

"Not that in general, you."

Will paused and gave his best-confused expression as his heart hammered in his chest, "What do you mean?"

"You and your *family*, we took your DNA to try and identify them, figure out what they lived to sting them. Tell me why your DNA didn't register as a human on our machines?"

His heart louped into his mouth and Will could feel his whole life fall apart in front of him, he could walk away right now, he wanted to walk away, but his feet were rooted to the ground, and words spilled from his mouth.

"Well... you heard my lecture, Occam's razor." He managed to mumble.

"Then what *are* you?"

Will tugged his hat off, allowing his ears to spring up into the cold wind. Jack stared at them, a mix of disbelief and bemusement.

"Are you going to fire me, Jack?" He was curt.

"Why would I?"

He gestured around the empty space, "Why else are we here?"

"You're a werewolf and a damn talented one at that... Are your senses any good?"

"I guess, why?"

"Good... I'm officially moving you onto the Miriam Lass case. My higher-ups also want to speak with you."

"I'll look for Miriam for you, but I'm not becoming some *toy* for the FBI to parade around as some display to reveal monsters are real. I mean," He scoffed lightly, "Freddie would have a field day with *that* one."

Jack handed Will a scrap piece of fabric, "So... How does it work?"

"I can track better as a wolf, and I'd prefer it if you looked away during this."

"Right..." Jack averted his eyes and Will took a deep breath, he hadn't willingly shifted in decades, he hoped he'd still remember how, or how to shift back once he was over. The sharp pain wracking his body reminded him that he was still able to achieve it, he sat down beside Jack and gave him a dirty look when Jack held out a vest.

"I can't exactly walk around a crime scene with a random dog, can I?"

Beverly looked at the dog following Jack, "That's Will?"

"Yeah, show him around the scene for me?"

"Uh... sure... come on Will."

Will glared and skulked along beside Beverly, she sighed and looked down at him, giving her best look of sympathy.

"Hey, this was going to happen sooner or later, you know that."

He made a grumbling noise. She pointed at the body.

"There, we found some of Miriam's things on the body, Brian wanted to bring in the dog squad, but I guess you're the replacement Jack said he'd bring."

Will walked over to the body and looked closer at it, Brian and Jimmy looked at him.

"Beverly? Is that the replacement?"

"Sure is, Jack asked the bureau down in Louisiana to lend him for a bit, apparently he's one of the best tracking dogs the FBI has to offer."

Jimmy crouched down in front of Will and stuck his hand out for him to smell, "He's cute, what's his name?"

"Uh..." She blurted, "Will."

Brian watched as Will reluctantly licked Jimmy's hand, much to his delight, "That's funny, we're lucky the *actual* Will isn't on this case, he would try to keep him after this was over."

Beverly laughed and nodded, "What kind of dog is he?"

"I'm not as good with breeds as Will is, but I'm guessing a Siberian Husky, they look pretty much identical to wolves."

Jimmy looked up at the two, "He's really friendly too."

"Come on Jimmy, Jack didn't bring him for us to play with all day, let him do his job and then maybe you can."

"Alright..."

Will shot Beverly a look before turning to the body, he sniffed around, trying to discern Miriam's perfume amongst the sharp copper scent of blood. His head reeled when he caught the scent of the lavender, trying not to gag from the strong smell. He sniffed again before starting to run after the trail, the trio hurrying after him as he made his way through the forest.

They reached a halt in a clearing, Will stopped and bristled at a basement door. Beverly turned to Brian.

"Go get the others."

Jack looked at the padlocked door and back at the tetchy look Will gave him.

"Jimmy, you wait out here with the dog, Beverly and I are going in."

"Alrighty then."

Will looked around nervously, he didn't have any resemblance of advantage against the pack closing in around them, he couldn't even shift back, risking Jimmy finding out. Jack and Beverly were already two too many.

The footsteps of Matthew approached as he stepped out towards the two, Will stepped in front of Jimmy and raised his hackles, creating a low growl. Jimmy pulled Will back a bit.

"Sorry, you're trespassing here, this is a crime scene now."

Matthew looked at Jimmy, "I'm not here for the investigation, I'm here for Will."

"What, the dog or Will Graham? Cause Will Graham isn't authorised for this case and you can't have the dog."

"Will Graham is here."

"No, he's not, he's teaching a class right now. Now if you'll excuse me-"

"I don't think you understand."

"No, I don't think *you* understand sir."

Matthew took a step forwards, towering over Jimmy. Will lunged forwards and sank his teeth into Matthew's hand, sending blood spilling across the grass. Matthew howled in pain and tried to pry Will's jaws off of him, only making them sink in deeper into his flesh. He was always nagged by his father to assert himself over lesser werewolves, and here he was, putting Matthew in his place.

Jimmy went wide-eyed and ran downstairs into the basement to get Beverly and Jack, Will let go to follow when Matthew grabbed him by the scruff and pinned him down into the blood stained grass.

"You bit me," he sneered, "I'll show you a reason to fear me, you mangy *fuck."*

Waxen wings on the horizon

Jack, Beverly, and Jimmy all ran upstairs from the commotion to greet Matthew on top of a very human-looking Will, with Matthew trying to land a punch in as Will slammed his knee into Matthew's side over and over again, trying to buck with enough force to give him a window of opportunity to roll over.

The window opened and he rolled, pinning Matthew down with his hips.

He breathed a sigh of relief and shook his head, giving the three a tired look.

"Figured you'd need my help."

"Hello Will," Jack feigned surprise, "How'd you guess we were here?"

"Read about the case, found Brian on my way here, found Matthew here about to chase Jimmy so I jumped him."

Jimmy looked around, "Where'd the dog go?"

"The little red one?"

"Yeah, did you see where he went?"

Matthew grunted and tried to move out from under Will, "The dog's right here." he rasped, lurching forward and contorting his body.

Will quickly moved around the rapidly shifting bones and instead wrapped his legs tightly around Matthew's neck, his heels dug in and tried to restrain the wolf that was now thrashing under him. Will pulled Matthew's head up, squirming against the snarls as he pushed his fist tightly against the wolf's neck; the thrashing got more and more violent until it slowed, then stopped as he passed out, slumping back down in the mud.

Matthew was strong, but he just wasn't that bright.

"Holy shit!" Jimmy looked amazed at what had just occurred, "What the hell was that?"

Will staggered to his feet and the bitter taste of bile flooded his mouth - he forgot what it was like to have to fight for his life - Matthew was a good wake-up call.

He spat the fluid out and groaned, his head still hadn't stopped spinning since the sledgehammer of a fist went right into his temple, and the double-vision made his vertigo worse. He straightened out his back and waved his hand dismissively at Beverly as she approached.

"I'm fine..." He wiped his nose and looked at the blood painted on his thumb from the action, "I'm not dead just yet."

"You could've."

"Am I missing something?" Jimmy asked, pointing at Matthew, "He just turned into a wolf!"

Jack turned to him, "I had hoped that this wouldn't happen before the briefing."

"Briefing?"

"Monsters, Price, they're real."

"Oh... Well." He looked down, a little embarrassed at his outburst, "This puts a bit of a spanner in the works if all those murderers are monsters, I mean, what's a bunch of humans like us going to do when we're up against a vampire or something?"

"That's where Will comes in."

"What?"

"Will?"

Will gestured to his head, "I'm a werewolf."

Jimmy paused, "That explains a lot, now that I think about it. I thought you were just... never mind."

Beverly nudged Matthew with her foot, "Let's get him into a questioning cell."

Hannibal pressed a damp cloth onto Will's head, frowning as the boy winced away from his touch.

"He hurt you."

"Not my proudest moment." Will screwed his face up as the cloth wiped his bloody nose, "I forgot how much of a punch he could throw."

"He could've killed you."

"Just tell me how bad I look, Hannibal."

"You're bruised and bloody, yet still just as reminiscent of Icarus as the day we met."

Will smiled weakly and let Hannibal massage his head, "Mhm... and are you Apollo?"

"You know what happened to Icarus when he got too close to him."

"Perhaps," He shut his eyes, "Would that be so bad? The wax gleaming under the heat as it poured molten down my spine, the feathers swarming me like droplets... All to be burned by you, though it wouldn't hurt, it would burst through me like a dagger, yet remain as gentle as

a lovers embrace. You would touch me and my skin would sear and the kiss we'd share would be sweet - short-lived perhaps - and I would reunite with you in the stars."

"I would shape the skies so that everyone could see how much you meant to me, mylimasis."

Will opened his eyes once more, and they shared a kiss that felt like broken glass against his bruised lip, he loved it all the same. Pain was a warning, a sign of danger, yet with Hannibal pain was a friend, something that sparked under Will's skin, sending the ripples across his body. It was gentle.

"You spoil me."

The kiss made its way down Will's neck and he tilted his head back, humming in appreciation as it brushed past a scar, settling on just above his clavicle.

"You deserve to be spoiled."

"Keep this up and I will be positively spoiled, *Doctor."*

A small smile ran across Hannibal's face, his head dipped and Will flushed red as the sensation of sucking tugged at his neck. He held Hannibal's hair and groaned softly, a noise that only spurred Hannibal further.

He finally let go of Will's neck and admired the weal that he had left behind, a reminder, a show of his affection.

"Spoiled?"

"That's going to leave a mark for a while, is it not?"

"A few weeks."

Will ran his finger across the hickey, "You definitely know how to treat a man."

"I'd hope so, I wish to drown in the sea of your desire."

He cocked his eyebrow, "That sounded like a euphemism."

"It can be if you want it to be."

A tilt of the head had Hannibal swooning, he adored how expressive the man in front of him would be around him, the slight movement of his head made him want to just engulf Will in his arms and have him for himself.

"I think it sounds like one I could get behind."

Will ached all over, the dull throbbing that was made worse by moving his arms in an attempt to try to push himself to sit up, only to be greeted with his lower back being set alight with

pain. He screwed his eyes shut and slogged his legs so they touched the wooden floor of his bedroom. He went to go find Hannibal.

He pushed himself to stand, but his legs crumpled and he went down like a ton of bricks.

The thud must've alerted Hannibal, as he quickly entered the room and lifted Will back into bed.

"Good morning Will, how's your throat?"

He opened his mouth to say, *"I'm fine,"* but the noises that came out hurt and barely sounded human, Hannibal nodded.

"I see your throat is still damaged, and you still can't walk?"

Will grumbled.

"You remember what happened?"

Remember? How could he forget? The mental image of Hannibal making him choke on his dick was practically ingrained into his memory. It probably explained why his vocal cords couldn't quite figure out how to make human noises, or why his throat burned and felt like swallowing gravel whenever he breathed.

He nodded, Hannibal brushed his hair out of his face.

"I suppose we went a bit overboard."

Will rubbed his face, allowing Hannibal to bridal carry him downstairs to the kitchen. He couldn't exactly protest or get down from the arms tightly holding onto him. Hannibal sat him down on the love seat, earning a pained grunt in response as Will squirmed.

"Honey is a natural anti-inflammatory, open your mouth for me."

He expected honey tea, or something that wasn't just a spoonful of honey being inserted into his mouth like a child being spoon-fed Calpol. Not that Will was complaining, in fact, his recent predicament just gave Hannibal more reasons to dote on him, and he wasn't about to start refusing the affection.

"How's that?"

"S'good..." Will managed to say, Hannibal seemed pleased with the reply.

"I think you need a few days off."

"Days?"

"Yes, as a doctor I deem it necessary for your recovery to have my round the clock care, I'll call Jack for you."

Doctors orders, Will gave a half-hearted sigh and nodded, pushing himself to sit upright as Hannibal picked up his phone.

"Hello?"

"You're not Jack."

Alana frowned, "You're not Will."

"I'm calling on his behalf."

"Why? What's wrong with him?"

"He can't speak. I believe it was a... a throat infection."

"Can I speak with him?"

Hannibal passed the phone over and Will attempted to clear his throat to speak better, only making the feeling worse.

"Hi, Alana..." He croaked.

"Oh *Jesus* Will, you sound awful."

"Yeah... Do you need me to come in?"

"What? No, no of course not, not while you sound like that."

There was some muffled chatter and the sounds of the phone being passed around from Alana's end, Jack's voice soon took over in the conversation.

"Will, I'm glad you called. We have some information about the ripper and I'll need your tracking skills, I can come pick you up from your house."

"Alana said-"

"I heard Alana's concerns, we have throat soothers while you work at the office."

He looked down at his legs, "I don't know..."

"What do you mean you don't know? *Lives* are at stake here Will."

"I know they are, it's just-"

"Just what?"

Will sighed and rubbed his face, "Never mind, just... How long?"

"10 minutes."

There was a click as they both hung up and Hannibal frowned.

"He's pushing you past your limit."

"Uh-huh, we can debate the legality of it later cher, pass me those crutches?"

"You're going to hurt yourself."

"We'll cross that bridge when we get to it."

Hannibal handed Will the crutches, "There won't *be* a bridge if you end up too sick to move."

"I know... you know how Jack is."

"He pushes you too much."

"Yep," Will kissed Hannibal's cheek, it seemed to have calmed him down a bit, "I'll be back soon."

"In one piece."

"You worry too much."

Moondrunk Monsters

The clicking of his cane irritated Will as he walked down the echoing corridor to the office, he couldn't imagine how Frederick dealt with the constant noise, though his human ears probably made it less painful.

He didn't know why he was here, and the look that the head of the bureau gave him when he walked in was enough to make him want to turn around and leave. He just about did just that, but relented.

"You must be Professor Graham," She said, "Please, sit down."

Will sat, and the pain that shot up his lower spine reminded him of the rest he should be having. He tried to imagine Hannibal's hands gently soothing his aching body, what he wouldn't do to have those hands on him again.

"Thank you."

He put a soother in his mouth and nodded, "Why am I here?"

"Jack told us about... your condition."

"Condition."

She pointed at his ears, "We don't exactly know the polite term for what you are."

"Werewolf."

"Right. *Werewolf..."* The woman cleared her throat, "We'd like to ask you a few questions, if you wouldn't mind, about monsters and such."

Will frowned, "I can only answer questions about being a Louisiana red wolf pack kind of werewolf."

"Well, let's start there."

"We function mostly like any other real wolf pack, but we tend to stay human when with family."

"Do you have any gods or goddesses? We'll need to debate adding them to the religious freedom act and-"

"We have some."

"Great, tell me about them."

"We have the goddess of the hunt and the god of the moon. Lady Cerne appears in the form of a wolf and during a hunt, they saw Lowella, enamoured by its beauty they decided to howl

for it, it heard their song and decided to give them the ability to become a human during the day, becoming a wolf again in its light in exchange for when they die, they would become the stars that surround it and they could become lovers."

"So you believe that you're... *descendants* of these two?"

"Of Lady Cerne, but we still howl for Lowella to show how thankful are for its blessing."

"Right..." She jotted something down, and Will took the opportunity to take a drink to try and keep the pain seething in his throat to a minimum, "Holidays or events?"

"We have coming of age ceremonies where they'll be taken on their first hunt in the name of Lady Cerne, and we have one for..." He cleared his throat and immediately regretted it, "For finding their *partner."*

"I can guess about the hunting celebration, but could you tell me more about the relationship aspect?"

"We dress in traditional clothes to mimic how Lady Cerne and Lowella met, we then have the partnering and we're supposed to end up mates for life, it's supposed to be definite and for millennia it always worked."

"What changed?"

"I left."

Meetings sucked.

There was always so many formalities, and even then so many layers of red tape were in place to prevent you from doing what you needed to do. Such was the way of bureaucracy, so much paperwork, so much red tape.

Freddie never paid much attention to paperwork.

She fixed her camera on her particular subject as of late and frowned. Will was looking particularly antsy as he sat at his desk, she walked inside and smiled.

"Good evening Will," the glib rolled off her tongue just like every other conversation, "I always called you a dog because of your behaviour, imagine my surprise when it turns out you *are* one."

"Hello Ms Lounds, I'm glad to see that you're not letting your education get in the way of your ignorance."

"Clever."

"What do you want?"

"Well, I have this photo of you, I guess people don't know you're half dog outside of the bureau."

"Doesn't matter, the FBI is going to release the existence of monsters to the public." Will shrugged, "Release it if you want, it won't do anything."

"Will the public still appreciate you if they think you're a bloodthirsty beast every full moon?"

"I plan every full moon to keep myself and others safe, I've even accounted for daylight savings." He frowned, "I'm 32, I'd like to think that I know what I'm doing at this rate."

"Have you accounted for freak weather?" She smirked as Beverly hurried into Will's office, looking very panicked.

"There's a massive snowstorm, we're effectively snowed in and can't leave until it clears."

Will felt the anxiety start to creep up, but squashed it. He knew things like this could happen, he had backup ideas, and if those failed...

He knew there was a gun loaded with silver in the drawer.

"Do you have any silver on you?"

Beverly shrugged, "I'll ask Jack, what's your plan?"

"We're going to need to lock me in a room and wait it out, silver will slow me down and make me weaker, does Alana still have that monkshood plant in her office?"

"Yeah."

"Good."

Will checked his watch, they had a few hours to prepare. He checked the different rooms, mentally noting any areas of fault where he could escape from as well as places where the others could hide. At least the pain in his back and legs would also act as a way of slowing him down - *three cheers to having a sex life*, he thought.

Jack caught up with Will as he poked his head into a break room.

"Will, Beverly told me what was happening."

"Hello Jack, do you have any silver in this building?"

"I have a silver ring, and Alana gave me her necklace."

Will nodded, "My office is a decent place to keep me in, you can see me through the glass and it's strong enough that I won't break out."

"Brian brought food to leave in there too."

"That's... a lot safer than what I initially planned for actually, if I'm not starving from the shift it'll be like just an average shift, albeit one I can't shift back from normally..." Will pushed his desk and chair to the furthest side of the wall, he pulled out the gun and passed it to Jack, "Here's the failsafe in case that doesn't work and I escape, one to the head should do it."

"Jesus Will, I'm not going to kill you."

He frowned, "It's that or me killing everyone else in here, and I'd rather not come to to me eating you or Alana or anyone here."

"It won't come to that, this building is secure."

"Just in case."

"I won't shoot you."

Will sighed, "In the legs then."

"Fine."

Time was ticking down, and Will had locked himself in his office early for final preparations. He put on the jewellery and immediately felt nauseous, which was a good sign as it made his body feel significantly weaker. He looked up at the sympathetic looks his friends gave him and walked over to the glass.

"Do not. Under *any* circumstances. Open this door *before* I recover my more human senses or before daylight." He frowned, "Got it? No matter how much in pain I sound, no matter how much I scream and sob, *don't* open the door before those two things happen."

They nodded. Will relaxed slightly.

"Good... You have the gun, I have food. See you all when I don't want to rip your throats out... That or in the morning."

He checked his watch and skulked back to his office. He wanted nothing more than to just go home and chain himself up his bedroom and have Hannibal make sure he doesn't try killing someone, at least Hannibal knew about how violent it gets.

The eyes fixated on him felt as though they were burrowing into him, waiting for him to go off like a bomb.

The sweat beading across his head was the first sign, as well as the aching.

He suddenly felt very exposed, shifting in front of the people he considered friends felt too intimate, hell, he couldn't look Beverly in the eye the week after she had seen him and *that* was by accident.

The ache became worse, and he hunched over the desk to compensate for his spine starting to separate and reform. He screwed his face up and tried to stay quiet, he didn't want to be in

audible pain, not to them. His feet shifting forced him to the floor and onto his knees, he felt his blood boiling, fur encapsulated.

Alana watched as Will's bones made noises akin to snapping as they moved under his skin, the guttural howl in pain sounded barely recognisable as human anymore when he covered his face. Even while in the worst pain of his life, he still found time to feel humiliation and tried to hide from having the others watch.

Freddie paused her recorder, "That was certainly... *something*, let's just say. Here's hoping that he doesn't brutally kill us all."

"Don't you have anything better to do?" Beverly snapped, "Does this not disprove that Will isn't the evil sociopath that you keep making him out to be? He's practically a puppy when he gets control over his body."

Will had found the food that was lain out for him and fed hungrily, the slow shift burnt through a ton of calories to make the hunt more thrilling, but hunger made him wilder, less in control of himself, made him unable to recognise friends or family. Everything was prey in his eyes.

He made his way through the worst of the hunger with relative ease, and his mind eased. He could see the group, they were all people he knew, he bounded up to the door and wagged his tail.

Everyone visibly relaxed, Beverly unlocked the door and Will walked out, she smiled at Freddie.

"Watch this," She looked down at Will and started petting him, "Who's a good boy? *Who's a good boy?"*

Any common, human sense was thrown out the window at those words. Will went into a frenzy, his tail became a blur as Brian and Jimmy joined in with the petting.

"Come on, Will might look like a dog right now, but he's still in there." Jack looked down at Will, "Let's treat him like normal, ok?"

A howling from outside drew everyone's attention, but it made Will bristle. He knew the howl that rang out first, the others mimicking. He didn't know what to do, he could run and hide, but the footsteps that echoed down the hallway made everyone turn around.

An older man stood there, he looked down at Will and smiled.

"Hello Will."

And then

"Hello Will."

The man stood tall, with wolves snapping around his ankles. He pulled at the long, dark green cloak and let the hood cascade onto his shoulders, the silver fur that adorned it glinting under the fluorescents.

Wolf fur.

Will knew he was supposed to dip his head and put his tail between his legs, just submit and listen to what the man had to say. This was *him*, this was the alpha of his pack, and unfortunately also his father. His brain screamed at him to *just bow down, just follow the rules and it'll keep him safe.*

His body ignored it and bristled, his hackles went up and he growled.

Jack stood beside him.

"Just who the hell are you?" He demanded.

The man laughed bitterly, "Did Will not tell you? I'm hurt, I really am." He took his hand and placed it across his chest, "Samuel Graham, it's a pleasure."

Will bared his teeth and Samuel smiled back, looking around the bureau, taking in the different materials and lights.

"I see you've made yourself *acquainted* with the locals here, even the *human* ones." He sneered, not bothering to hide his disgust, "Now I hope this ain't true, but Matthew's been telling me you went and got *involved* with the most unfortunate type, really boy? You know better than to meddle with outsers, now look at you."

There was a silence in the air as Will stepped forwards, Samuel shook his head and tutted dismissively.

"Look at you, don't even know how to control yourself during the moon."

"What do you want?" Beverly snapped, getting the wolves attention, "Will made it pretty clear he doesn't want to go back."

Samuel growled, "You humans and your *customs*, they bore me. Werewolves live and die by family, understand? It's simple, Lady Cerne chose *him* to be with Matthew, that's how it's *always* been, how it always *will be."*

"I think your ceremony must've fucked up then, cause Will doesn't like Matthew."

Samuel removed his cloak and tossed it, landing unceremoniously on Will's back. He didn't even need to say a word, the threat of violence was made clear with the glare that soured his

face. Samuel turned his attention back to Will, holding out his hand.

"Don't make me tell you again Will." He glowered, "Come back to us, and I'll leave your friends alone."

Will stood taller and bared his fangs again, a direct display of dominance against Samuel.

"Oh? You want to *challenge* me?" Samuel laughed haughtily, "Alright boy, I'll fight you."

Rules. There were always rules within the pack: Don't run away, don't attack your packmates without reason, don't challenge the alpha. Will looked up at Samuel, even as a wolf he was almost double his size, and even bulkier to match.

Maybe he should listen to rules more.

They circled each other, Will could smell the anger rolling off of his dad in waves, though he refused to relent under the pressure. He wanted - *needed* - to show them that he was to be left the *hell* alone, he wasn't some *kid* needing to be brought back home, he was his own *goddamn* master, the creator of his own fate, he didn't need the gods to do that for him.

Will shot a look at the group, if he could distract Samuel and the two others long enough, they could get to a place to hide until...

Until what? There wasn't anywhere to escape, they were snowed in, and there wasn't any particular type of *'backup'* available.

Samuel lunged forwards, snapping his jaws furiously at Will's legs as the boy scrambled to get out of the way. Will narrowly avoided another lunge by the skin of his teeth, getting some of his fur pulled out in the process.

He bit back, just managing to nip Samuel's ankle. They both knew how each other fought, the dirty tactics each other used. It helped even things out slightly - but not enough - Will ducked, trying to put some distance between the two.

The next lunge sent him rolling across the floor, a hot pain seared in his leg as he stood upright. Will put the paw down and instantly retracted it again, grimacing internally, Samuel had managed to bite him. He lurched, swiping the opposing wolf's hind legs. His claws connected with something, spilling blood onto the wood.

Both wolves snarled.

This was going to be painful.

Jack rounded up the group and locked themselves in Will's office, he was internally thankful for Will's paranoia as he pulled out another gun from under the students' seats. He loaded the silver slugs into the shotgun and handed it to Beverly.

"Search the room, there's probably weapons hidden all over the shot."

Alana bent down and unsheathed a bowie knife, feeling how it weighed in her hand, "I suppose we should thank him after all this is over, we thought he was just paranoid about being attacked..."

"Not healthy, thinking your family could burst in through a window at any moment to attack." Beverly said, shaking her head at the thought.

The window to Will's office opened, and Hannibal climbed through. He casually brushed the snow off of his suit and frowned.

"Hello Jack, I got your message about what had happened."

"Hannibal?" Jack looked at him incredulously, "I told you to alert the rest of the FBI to get *backup*, not break-in."

"Your backup is coming, I thought it'd be faster if I also came to assist you." He looked around, "Where is Will?"

Beverly noticed the once stoic Hannibal display an emotion she didn't know he could feel, Hannibal tried to mask his anxiety under the guise of concern, but she noticed.

"We have guns," She said, "Let us help you."

Hannibal turned to Beverly and nodded, "Come on. Day is breaking, he'll be human by now."

Kicked while lying down, what a way to go.

Will pulled the cloak over his body as multiple boots hammered into his side again, he grunted in pain as the wind was knocked out of him, his arms trembled underneath him when he tried to push himself up. Samuel leaned down and grabbed a fistful of Will's curls, yanking his hair so that he was staring at him and the two men at his side.

"Why...?" Samuel asked, "Why *humans?* I mean... I would've understood if you left to be with another werebeast group, the werebears down south in Texas... But *humans?* You're ruining our lineage."

"Humans... Humans don't think it's ok... to beat the shit out of their kids." Will hissed, "Maybe... Maybe you could *learn* something from them."

He almost vomited when Matthew punched him in the jaw, his eyesight spotted black and the room span in circles. Samuel growled, pulling out a knife.

"You need to watch your *tongue*, boy." He threatened. He went to let Matthew strike Will again but noticed the puncture scars on the boy's neck. His face went red, and Will couldn't help but taunt.

"Surprise... looks like that whole plan... with Matthew isn't going to-"

A white-hot pain burst through his stomach, and Will looked down at the blade. He opened his mouth to speak, but the most he could do was whimper as his breathing became erratic.

His blood began to spill out, he was bleeding, he looked back up at his father, eyes wide in silent bemusement.

Teeth gritted, he held onto the blade with a death grip. He had to keep it in place, if it was removed he would just bleed out faster. The room seemed to sway and move around as Samuel sighed, protruding one claw.

"You know what we have to do."

Will panted and shook his head violently, Matthew held his head in place. His eyes widened in panic as Samuel dug his claw into his forehead.

"S-Stop it." He spluttered, *"Stop..."*

Blood ran hot down his face as the mark was embedded. He was let go, and he crumpled to the floor, grasping at the blood that seeped through the cloak and onto the floor. Samuel frowned.

"You said wanted to be left alone, *now* you'll be left alone."

He shut his eyes, trying desperately to take his mind off of the pain. Their footsteps echoed away, and the cold hallway was the only thing to keep him company. He tried to control his breathing, he needed to stop hyperventilating, stop himself from going into shock.

Voices were shouting, but it was all so muffled, he couldn't hear what was being said. Someone hoisted him up and said something that he could make out.

"Elevate his legs please, we need to keep the blood flowing towards his organs."

Will whimpered.

He hated playing hero.

Hospitals had a collection of smells.

Disinfectant was always the main smell, overpowering, an assault on the nose, even for humans. Will could tell he was in a hospital when he woke up, the disinfectant made him want to heave. That was a good sign, he hoped, *at least he was alive.*

He remembered the slash across his forehead.

Claws always scarred over, there wasn't any way to avoid it. He just hoped he wouldn't get scurvy.

He opened his eyes and groaned, the light burned. Hannibal sat up and held Will's hand, watching the boy get accustomed to the sudden bright scenery.

"You had everyone worried." He spoke softly.

"Please..." Will screwed his face up, "Don't *'I told you so'* me..."

Hannibal stifled a smile, after all that happened, Will still managed to retain his sense of humour. He stared at where the new scars across Will's abdomen and head would end up, he wanted nothing more than to watch the life leave from the eyes of Samuel as he carved him open and - like a reversed Tantalus - feed Will the remnants.

"I will refrain from doing so, mano meile."

"Are the others ok?"

"Yes, you don't need to worry."

Will rubbed his face, "He got upset about us being together."

"Are you upset about that?"

"What? *No."* He frowned, curt with his response, "Of course not, I haven't seen him or the others in *years*, why would I care what they think about *me* or my relationships?"

"Because you're a werewolf, family is important to you. Why else would you have gotten into a fight?"

"He was threatening my friends."

"Is that the only reason?" Hannibal held Will's hand, "Or did you fight him because it would've given you more time to spend with him?"

"Cher, please don't *psychoanalyse* me while I'm recovering."

"You're avoiding the question."

"Yes, ok? I just... I wanted him to see that I wasn't weak, so maybe he'd be impressed or... or *something*. I didn't expect him to accept... us, but part of me - a stupid and *naïve* part of me - hoped he had changed his mind."

"Optimism isn't stupid." He passed a bowl to Will, "You were optimistic about your family, of course you'd be."

"You made me soup."

"I did."

Will held the bowl up to his mouth and drank, he sighed softly and watched as Hannibal looked content. He sniffled slightly, licking the remnants of the soup off his lips.

"Thank you."

Hannibal tilted his head slightly and Will groaned internally at the sign that Hannibal was about to psychoanalyse him yet again, that or go on another spiel about werewolf psychology

and how he reacts to certain things. *Was it his issues making him weir, or was it just him being weird cause he's half dog?*

Not that he was *disdainful* towards Hannibal's elaborate discussions, just that it was hard to keep up with his in-depth analysis of the human psyche when his own felt like it was about to dissipate into a million broken shards.

"What's your favourite meal?"

He laughed slightly, "What, you're offering me my last meal?"

"No, you've had a rough time. I want you to have something to sit down and enjoy with me."

Something glinted in Will's eyes at the thought of food, the glint of delight, he leaned back and smiled.

"I miss the gumbo that the pack would make, we'd take leftover scraps of meat from hunts and toss it into this massive pot with other spices and such... Me and a few of the younger cubs would all stand around it, we'd take turns stirring. It was a big family get together thing for us all, you can't just make it yourself, gotta get everyone involved, y'know?" He blinked back tears that threatened to spill, "I miss... I just miss the whole feeling of *family*, before everything that caused... all *this."*

"Would you like to make it with Abigail and I?"

Will nodded.

The world caved in

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The blood that filled the wolf's maw was sour - *fear always did spoil the taste of meat* - whatever that was left of the prey would be found by hunters, quickly disposed of before the crows or vultures got to it.

The wolf tore flesh from bone, stripping and chewing whatever it could sink its jaws into. It turned to the pup that hid behind it, pulling smaller and more easily digestible pieces for him.

Memories of the prey never seemed right to the pup, it should be deer, it was always deer from what he could - *wanted* - to recall. He looked closer and saw the torn fabric across the grass. The glazed eyes seemed to stare right back at the boy.

It was *human.*

Hannibal noticed the haunted expression that lingered on Will's face ever since he had woken up, even since he was discharged from the hospital, the grim look never left. He watched Will stare out of the window like he often did when plagued with thoughts. Hannibal stood next to him.

"You seem tormented."

"I wanted to remember the times I had with my pack when I was a boy, I remembered my father hunting."

"You saw something you didn't want to remember."

Will looked away: "No... Something I tried to cover up, I purposely obscured it... I guess I couldn't hide from it anymore."

"We all do things we despise in order to survive."

"I *ate* someone, Hannibal. I forced myself to remember it as deer. That's not *survival*, that's being *fucking complicit.* I..." Will looked even more distressed as he struggled to find the words, "I ate people. Jesus, *I ate people...* What the fuck is wrong with me?"

The guilt burrowed into his heart, and Will broke under the weight, tears escaped and flowed freely down his face.

Hannibal turned Will's head so they were looking at each other, he looked at the new scar across Will's head.

"When I was a boy, there was a snowstorm. My parents had left to find food weeks ago, my younger sister and I boiled the leather from our shoes to eat so we wouldn't starve."

"I don't-"

"Soldiers came by the house one day, they were starving too. Mischa was ill, so they killed and ate her." Hannibal frowned, "I was going to die if I didn't eat, do you understand?"

He paused, "Yes."

"Good. Then you know that I won't judge you for your actions, and for as long as you'll have me, I'll make sure you won't starve."

Will blinked, making a face as though he had just discovered something.

"That's why you cook for everyone? Because you don't want your friends to go hungry like you did?"

"It is."

"Oh..." He nodded in understanding, "I guess you wouldn't like to hear my eating habits during the time before we met."

"I suppose it's to do with your extreme aversion to anything resembling help, growing up in a culture where your extreme empathy wasn't valued. You were seen as weak for it, as a result, you push people away who try to show genuine compassion and empathy to you. It's why you take in all your dogs, you don't trust people enough to let your guard down, ergo you adopt them."

"They were *abandoned*, dogs feel nothing but *love* towards their owners... They do *everything* in hopes of making them happy because *they love them,* humans toss them aside like a toy when they become too old, or not pretty enough." Will folded his arms as though he were hugging himself, "They want someone that loves them and won't abandon them the moment they can't do what they used to."

"You feel abandoned."

"I abandoned the pack myself."

"Did you?"

Will's jaw clenched as he looked away.

"They... I abandoned them, *they* didn't abandon me."

"It's natural for people to not believe that someone hurt them, and instead blame it on themselves."

"I don't want your pity." He snapped bitterly.

"I'm not offering pity." Hannibal spoke softly, "I want to offer my understanding, you were kicked out because-"

"Because I have joint issues, ok?"

"Arthritis?"

Will went quiet for a moment before shaking his head, "Ehlers Danlos."

"I appreciate that you told me, I know it's not easy."

"I'm going to go fishing."

"You need rest to recover, you've only just been let out of the hospital."

"Let me show you how we made Gumbo and I'll rest."

"Alright."

Abigail carefully stepped downstairs and followed the smell of food into the kitchen. Hannibal turned around to note her arrival and smiled.

"Hello, Abigail."

"What're you two doing?"

"Will wanted to make his favourite food from when he was younger, would you like to help?"

"Sure."

She stood next to Will, who was completely engrossed in cooking. Hannibal made sure the two turned their attention to the food and quietly slipped out.

The anger inside him began to bubble over once more as he remembered Will back in the office, his stomach torn open from the blade. It was the look of bitter betrayal that surged it further, he allowed his human facade to melt away, becoming the creature that lurked beneath his skin.

A horned thing of monstrous proportions, he had two dark antlers that added to his already tall stature, his nails shaping into lethal blade-like weapons. He blinked, allowing for his now pale white eyes to adjust to the light. The smell of werewolf became stronger, and he followed it into a clearing where he saw him.

Samuel turned and looked at Hannibal, unfazed at the vampiric beast before him.

"You must be the *bloodsucker* that my son is so obsessed with."

"You nearly killed him."

"See, you may think you care about him... But you don't, you *never* will." He sneered, "I'm ensuring the future of the pack."

"You only want him back into your fold because you can't have children, yet you still want your bloodline to continue."

"I care about Will, he's my son."

"Will is more of a father than you'll ever be. You're a failure who signed away your chances of having a relationship with him the moment he was born."

Samuel roared angrily, grabbing the knife - the one he stabbed Will with - and lunged towards Hannibal.

He barely reacted, moving aside and grabbing the mans wrist, pushing him away from his stomach. Samuel punched, sending Hannibal stumbling backwards slightly as it connected with his nose, though he recovered in time to bat away the slash of claws that flew at his face.

He dug his claws into Samuel's shoulder, spilling blood onto the grass as he tore into the flesh. Samuel bit down on Hannibal's hand, to which he responded by slamming his head into a tree.

Once, twice, three times before tossing him like a ragdoll, the bushes breaking the abrupt landing.

Hannibal stalked over to Samuel, standing over him like a cat toying with its prey.

"Will Graham is *mine."* Hannibal hissed, low and full of malice, "I think I'll feed him your liver - so that he can taste how much of a coward you are for abandoning him."

"That smells good."

Will smiled, "I know, right? We'd have this a lot when I was a boy, every week we'd gather all the scrap meats leftover from hunting and toss it into a big pot like this."

"Do you cook often?"

"Not as much as I'd like to, Hannibal often does all of that... The most I can really cook is fish anyways."

Abigail shrugged, adding more pepper to the pot, "What do you do for fun? You've mostly been at work. I don't think I've ever seen you have fun, outside of being with Hannibal at least."

"I fish mostly, but I do other things like repair motorboats... I make my own lures."

"Do you do anything arty? Hannibal showed me his drawings."

"I carve wood sometimes."

"Could you show me some?"

"Sure," He smiled, "Bring the pot to a simmer and I'll make you something. Should be ready for whenever Hannibal shows up from his outing."

Abigail lit up, quickly doing what she was asked and sitting at the island. Will picked up a block of wood and his things before sitting down next to her.

"What're you gonna make?"

"I've got this softwood, easier to make more intricate carvings." He spoke as he whittled away, "You need to be careful with the instruments, I know an old friend from university who's missing the tip of his thumb because of a chisel."

"Really?"

"Mhm."

"Wow... Who taught you how to carve?"

"I taught myself, I started with little small blocks like this. Some trees at my house down in Wolf Trap have faces carved into them, scares away wolves and other predators."

Abigail watched as the wood in Will's hands took shape, slowly transforming into a small bear cub. She lit up when Will passed it to her.

"Oh my god, this is *amazing."* She looked up at Will, "Thank you."

"Of course. If you promise not to slice your fingers, and to clean up after yourself, do you want to try out your own carving?"

"Yes please."

Hannibal smiled and kissed Will when he entered the kitchen, a small tub in hand.

"Where were you off to?" Will asked, his tail wagging away.

"I thought that you would enjoy some duck liver with this, I just went out to get some for you."

"That does sound nice... Go put it in, I'm going to get Abigail a block of wood to carve."

"Of course, meškiau."

Chapter End Notes

Hello all:

I wasn't feeling well at all during the weekend, so I took a break. I had a really bad headache and I felt burnt out from the workload I've had recently. However, I'm feeling a lot better - if a bit guilty- and I'll try to be consistent with my posting.

The good news is that I've finished my Higher/A-level exams! :)

I'm also in the process of getting my provisional drivers licence too! Lots to be excited about!

Thank you again for all your continued support, your lovely comments are what encourages me to keep writing these chapters.

In the dead of night

Numbness.

That's what he felt whenever he looked at bodies. He supposed it was a defence mechanism - the numbness - it shut the empathy out long enough so he didn't break down. Numbness was comforting, he wore it like a shield, a cloak he would only remove when it came to killers. Numb was his friend, it kept him sane, kept him alive.

Will looked at the dead body that belonged to his father but the numbness didn't cloak his mind like it did with all those other bodies. Instead, his mind bred contempt for the man before him, his corpse was pinned to a kneeling position against the tree, hands up, holding a white sheet of fabric.

"Are you sure you're ok being here?" Jack asked, "I mean, this *is* your dad."

"He surrendered."

"What?"

"My dad, he was always so damn *proud* of how he never surrendered, even if it meant killing people and betraying friends." Will gave a small smile at the symbolism, an inkling of joy from the gift, "The Ripper made him surrender to him, this is a gift to me, a way to make things even."

"I can get one of the other's profile-"

"No, this is for me. He'll get angry if anyone else were to do it."

He stepped close and shut his eyes, allowing himself to walk through the door into The Ripper's mind.

The pendulum swung.

Will walked briskly through the woods, the smell of wolf was still strong in the air.

He smiled at Samuel, it was disingenuous at best, mimicking the baring of the teeth wolves used to challenge each other. It was a threat.

"I don't take him by surprise like usual, I challenge Samuel face to face; I want to see if he's the same abusive pig if he was faced with someone that'll *actually* fight back. This is my design."

Batting the knife away, he grabbed the man by the shoulders as his claws dug in, his face contorted in disgust at the blood that spilled onto the grass.

"I'm not impressed."

He almost didn't register the bite, but Samuel did register the repeated slamming into the tree.

Beverly frowned as she watched Will.

"You brought him to investigate the death of his own dad? What the *hell* Jack?"

"Will wanted to, he said The Ripper wouldn't like it if I got any of the other profilers involved."

"He's taking a lot longer than usual."

"I'll make sure he's ok, why don't you take him out for drinks later? You all deserve it for dealing with this mess."

"You drive a hard bargain, Crawford." She smiled, "I think we'll take you up on that offer."

Jack stood next to Will, he was still looking spaced out.

"You alright?"

Will seemed to come to life from the question, blinking and turning to face Jack.

"What?"

"I asked if you were ok, it's nasty business, losing a parent."

"I'm ok." He looked down and kicked a loose stone, "I don't really feel anything towards him, now that he's dead. I guess I'm supposed to be *sad*... but I'm not, not really. He wasn't a good man, or a good father, he was ruthless and a murderer."

"You've been down in the dumps since that whole ordeal in the office."

He shrugged, "I suppose so. Spent all this time to try and hide this whole monster stuff, now it's all out in the open and everything feels... *wrong* somehow."

"Wrong how?"

"Not to sound rude, but I don't like being asked about being a werewolf. I worked so *hard* to put my past behind me and just *move on,* only to get dragged right back into it. It's selfish, I know, but I don't exactly have the *fondest* of memories about my pack, why would I want to talk about a part of me that I don't want? Werewolf beliefs and politics... It's messy, and now with Samuel dead, they're going to want an alpha to lead them."

"That's not rude, you're setting boundaries, I get that." Jack took his hat off and sighed, "Do you want to talk about the alpha issue?"

"They're going to want me to go back and lead them, that involves me being with Matthew. I'd sooner gnaw off my tail than do that, even if I wanted to, I've bonded with Hannibal, and werewolves mate for life. I..." He trailed off and his posture changed, "I don't feel well."

"Describe it."

"Bad."

"Is it your head? Your stomach?"

"Everywhere, it just feels... *bad."*

"Go take a break, I think you're burnt out from the constant work."

"But-"

"Send me your profile later, go with Beverly, ok? Take a break."

"Jack-"

"That's an order."

Will furrowed his brow, opened his mouth to protest, and went quiet, nodding.

"Ok."

The bar went silent when Will walked in with Beverly, something he would have to get used to he supposed, it seemed as though everyone had read Freddie Lounds' article about Will Graham the werewolf who worked for the FBI.

The chatter revived itself not long after they sat down, Beverly clapped Will on the shoulder.

"Hey, don't pay those people any mind, alright? We're here for one thing and one thing only."

"Which is?"

"To get positively shit-faced."

Will smiled, and Beverly went to grab drinks.

He frowned at the returning feeling, his whole body felt out of place and clammy. It was uncomfortable, but the sharp taste of whiskey washed away his previous discomfort. Beverly had lined up a row of shots and grinned.

"Wanna play never have I ever?"

"Sure."

She grinned more, putting a number of bottles on the table, "Alrighty, I'll go first. Never have I ever... eaten dog or cat food."

Will sighed, wincing down a shot, it burned on the way down.

"Jesus, what's in these?"

"It's just a mix of Jack Daniels and Vodka."

"Alright... Never have I ever gone skinny dipping."

He watched as Beverly took a shot, she looked at him in slight surprise.

"Really? Never?"

"Nope."

"Remind me to convince you when you're drunk enough."

"I don't think I will."

They laughed, and Beverly kicked up the game again.

"Never have I ever... had an embarrassing injury from sex."

Will sighed and took another shot, grimacing. "I'm sure you're well aware of what happened."

"Do I?" She grinned, "I think you might just have to tell me *again* about what happened, was it when you came into work with a cane and unable to talk?"

The bright red flush across Will's face made her laugh.

"It might've been." He murmured.

"What's Hannibal like? I never pegged you as being into older guys."

Will balked, "He's not *that much* older than me, we have a six-year age gap."

"I suppose so... Anyways, back to the main question: What is Hannibal Lecter like?"

"What? In bed or like in general?"

"Why not both?" Beverly joked, taking another shot for the hell of it, "We're friends and we're both adults, we can judge each other's sex lives, can't we not?"

Will swirled the shot in his hand and drank it, "He's... Really nice to be honest, I expected him to be all super in control and stuff."

"Mmmm, seems to me we had the same impression."

"He's gentle when he wants to be, but I honestly wouldn't mind seeing what else he could do."

"Is he...?" She asked, raising her eyebrows. Will giggled.

"Yes, he is."

"Damn... Lucky boy, proud of you Mr Graham."

"There's hope for me yet with the men that're interested in me."

"That's for sure, no more dating weird obsessive serial killing psychopaths for you!"

"I'll drink to that." He grinned, finishing the last of his shots.

"Right, skinny dipping, you in or not?"

Will sighed and shrugged, "Why not?"

"Are you *sure* this is the best place?"

"Uh-huh," Beverly placed her hand across her chest, "I solemnly swear that Hannibal won't catch us swimming naked in the lake."

Will discarded his shirt and nearly fell in as he stumbled, the alcohol making his body feel funnier than normal. He wasn't very drunk, and sitting in the cold water of the lake startled him into almost complete sobriety. He chalked it up to Jack's theory of burnout and watched Beverly jump in after him.

"It's *freezing..."* He stammered, rubbing his arms, "Are you *sure* this is fun?"

"Come on dog boy, you can't be colder than *I* am!" She teased, splashing him with water, "You've got fur!"

"I also grew up in the south!"

Beverly went to say something, but noticed a dog hurrying over to Will, wagging its tail excitedly.

"We've got a friend."

"Huh?" Will looked at the dog, "Winston? What're you doing out so late at night?"

Winston barked happily and picked up Will's clothes before taking off across the grass. Will paled and debated chasing the dog or staying in the water as Beverly went into hysterics.

"Winston!" He hissed, *"Come back here!"*

Beverly giggled and put her clothes on, "I'll go get him, you hold tight buddy."

She patted her thighs and tried to call Winston over, but he just ran over to Hannibal and dropped the clothes at his feet.

"Hello, Beverly."

"Uh... Hi Dr Lecter."

"Where's Will?"

"Well, *funny* story..." She laughed awkwardly, "He's a bit stuck."

"Stuck?"

"In the lake."

Hannibal paused, "How - pray tell - did he manage to achieve that?"

"Well, it's easier if I showed you."

Will smiled in relief when Beverly approached, which was quickly turned into a look of fear when he spotted Hannibal alongside her. He quickly shielded himself with his hands and felt his face burn in embarrassment.

"Good evening brangusis."

"Hi..."

"Miss Katz informed me that you're stuck."

He hung his head in shame.

"Yes."

Hannibal took a towel from under his arm and held it open. Beverly decided it was best to leave as Will shuffled over and let himself get wrapped up, Hannibal put his hand to Will's head and frowned.

"Let's bring you inside, you're burning up." He said, leading Will towards the house.

"I don't feel sick."

"No, but since your pack leader died, you're next in line biologically."

Will groaned, "This is my body wanting me to... to look after children, isn't it?"

"Pups specifically, but yes."

"Goddammit."

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